過ぎる十七の春①

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「過ぎる十七の春」講談社刊

過ぎる十七の春①　目次

chapter 1　3
chapter 2　33
chapter 3　65
chapter 4　97
chapter 5　127
chapter 6　159
chapter 7　189

This s my child, mine.
Please don t do this. I'm beg-ging you..
Mama..

第1話
ゴト
ゴト
ゴト

WOW
IT'S BEAUTIFUL
THIS MUST BE WHAT THE WORLD OF FAIRYTALES LOOK LIKE!
LIKE A KINGDOM OF FLOWERS.

BUT IT REALLY IS BEAUTIFUL NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I SEE IT
SIGH
THERE YOU GO AGAIN,
YOU SAY THE SAME THING EVERY YEAR WHEN YOU COME HERE
IT'S INCREDIBLY BEAUTIFUL!
ALTHOUGH THE SUN SHINES BRIGHTLY HERE, THE TEMPERATURE IS SOMEWHAT LOW.
IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE OF THE BALANCE OF LATITUDE AND ELEVATION,
IT'S AMAZING! THESE SPRING FLOWERS ARE ALL BLOOMING AT ONCE
rattle
rattle
WE'RE ALMOST THERE,
NORIKO, GET READY
That isn't what I meant either!
OKAY, OKAY! I GOT IT THIS PLACE IS REALLY PRETTY
HA HA
THAT ISN'T WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

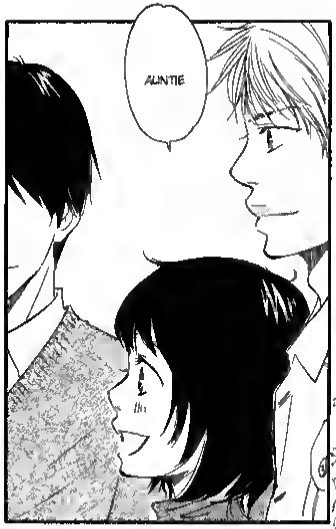
ARE YOU HERE ON HOLIDAY?
RATTLE
stop
stop
BOW
SORT OF...
WE'RE HERE TO VISIT OUR RELATIVES
YES, THIS IS MY BROTHER, UNFORTUNATELY
I WISH I COULD FIND A BOYFRIEND AND COME HERE WITH HIM INSTEAD
AHAHA.
THE WEATHER'S TURNED GOOD ALL OF THE SUDDEN IT'S ONLY MARCH BUT IT GOT WARMER REALLY EARLY
IS THIS YOUR OLDER BROTHER?
IS THIS YOUR FIRST VISIT HERE?
NO,
WE COME HERE EVERY SPRING AND SUMMER IT'S A LOT WARMER THIS YEAR, ISN'T IT?

A LITTLE PAST THE STATION RIGHT?
HA HA, "VILLAGE" IS A GOOD WORD
IN A HAMLET OUTSIDE THIS VILLAGE.
OVER THERE
WHERE DO YOUR RELATIVES LIVE?
IN THAT CASE DON'T GET OFF HERE I'LL DROP YOU OFF BY THE SHORTCUT
Alright.
THE BLOOMS ARE REALLY ABUNDANT THIS YEAR
PROBABLY BECAUSE THE WEATHER'S GOOD
Bliss
http://bliss.fanmoe.org

TAKASHI-CHAN!
RATTLE
WELCOME
Every year during spring and summer break, we pay a visit to the Kuga family. It's a long-standing tradition.

YOU TWO MUST BE TIRED!
TROT
TROT
I WAS IN THE YARD WHEN I HEARD YOUR VOICES
HOW DID YOU KNOW WE WERE HERE?

YOU'VE GROWN TALLER.
Heh, heh.
WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER SINCE THE SUMMER BREAK LAST YEAR. I'VE BEEN GROWING TALLER RECENTLY AND MIGHT BE TALLER THAN YOU PRETTY SOON.
Takashi is my cousin, one school year below me.
YO!
WE'LL BE IMPOSING ON YOU AGAIN THIS YEAR!
TCH. I'M ALREADY STARTING TO SLOW DOWN
HA HA HA
Only half a month separates us in age.
That being said, I was born in March and Takashi in April.
HOW'S AUNTIE?
SHE'S WELL
BY THE WAY, NORI-CHAN, WHAT TYPE OF FLOWER WOULD YOU LIKE?
Let me think.



Aunt Mikiko is very elegant and quiet

She and Takashi became a family of two because of his father's early death

*Mochi = sweet and sticky snack made of rice flour

Takashi was born into a wealthy farming family. The courtyard of their house is always filled with different flowers.
THEN I'LL JUST GO PUT MY LUGGAGE DOWN!
When we're here, even breathing seems to become easier.
SIGH.
THIS PLACE REALLY MAKES ME FEEL AT EASE
YOU USED TO CRY WHEN YOU CAME HERE AS A KID.
THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. STOP BRINGING IT UP!
WHO WAS IT WHO KEPT SAYING THE CORRIDOR WAS SCARY AND COULDN'T STOP CRYING!

WHAT'S THE POINT IN ASKING? HOW COULD MY BROTHER POSSIBLY HAVE A GIRLFRIEND!
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN!?
I SHOULD BE THE ONE ASKING YOU THAT
SO, TAKASHI, HAVE YOU GOTTEN A GIRLFRIEND YET?

NEVER YOU MIND!
MY BEST YEARS ARE AHEAD OF ME
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'VE GOT SOMEBODY TO GIVE CHOCOLATES TO YOURSELF RIGHT?
YOU'RE SUCH A PAIN! I'VE GOT A TOUGH GUY IMAGE TO UPHOLD
HE DIDN'T EVEN GET A SINGLE PITY CHOCOLATE ON VALENTINE'S DAY.

turn
YOU'RE ALWAYS DRAGGING UP THE PAST TO TEASE PEOPLE JUST LIKE AN OLD GEEZER, AND A LOW-DOWN ONE TO BOOT.
flick
OH RIGHT, RIGHT,
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO BE TAKASHI'S BRIDE DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT?
HAVE YOU GIVEN UP ON THAT ALREADY?
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT, BUT I CHANGED MY VIEWS ON MARRIAGE IN JUNIOR HIGH
YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE HAVE CHANGED SINCE KINDERGARTEN, HAVEN'T THEY?
ABOVE A PICTURE YOU WROTE, "WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE A KANGAROO." SO CUTE. ♡
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I CAME ACROSS YOUR KINDER-GARTEN SCRIBBLING

DID I REALLY WRITE THAT...?
MUM'S KEPT EVERYTHING OF YOURS IN PERFECT CONDITION.
I WAS HELPING HER GET READY YESTERDAY AND COULDN'T HELP LAUGHING
THAT WAS CHILDISH IGNORANCE.
GACK!
OH YEAH?
BUT YOU HAVEN'T GROWN A TAIL YET AS FAR AS I CAN SEE
YOU HAVE TO KEEP AT IT, OTHERWISE YOU CAN'T BECOME A KANGAROO WHEN YOU'RE GROWN UP!
YOU'RE SUCH A PAIN!
TAKASHI! IF YOU WANT TO LAUGH, GO AHEAD!
MUM EVEN LOOKED A LITTLE LOST AND DEPRESSED WHEN SHE SAW THAT DRAWING OF YOURS
MAYBE SHE HAD A PREMONITION THAT HER BELOVED SON WOULD HAVE HIS WISH GRANTED ON THIS TRIP AND TURN INTO A KANGAROO

ARE YOUR PARENTS WELL?
YOU TWO SURE HAVE GROWN UP
Heh heh
THEY'RE DOING GREAT!
ESPECIALLY MY OLD LADY SHE PROBABLY COULDN'T DIE EVEN IF SHE WAS MURDERED
SHE'S STILL A NOISY BRAT NOT IN THE LEAST RELIABLE
MY BROTHER'S A LONG WAY FROM BEING GROWN-UP HIMSELF HE HASN'T EVEN GROWN HIS TAIL YET
SHE JUST LOOKS IT!
IT'S ONLY BEEN A WHILE, YET NORIKO-KUN HAS BLOSSOMED INTO SUCH A PRETTY YOUNG LADY
NOT AT ALL!

THE HOUSE IS TOO QUIET WITH JUST TAKASHI AND ME IN IT
NOT AT ALL
SORRY FOR ALWAYS BEING SO NOISY.
Heh heh
Sorry about that...
WITH YOU TWO AROUND THE HOUSE, IT INSTANTLY GETS LIVELIER THAT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY.
Heh heh
I thought I told you to quit screwing that up!
step
OH!

Ha ha ha
SHE'S COMPLETELY IGNORING ME
The Third is a female cat with stripes on her fur like the stage name of the actor Nakamura Utaemon III hence she's been named for him, and shortened to "The Third.
WELL LOOK HERE IT'S THE THIRD!
SHE LOOKS WELL
trot
Takashi's always bringing home stray kittens and puppies
Even wild boar piglets, foxes and weasels, although they were either given away to other families or to the zoo, or just returned to the wild
There are still some animals which keep coming back to look for Takashi.
So animals always seem to be around this house.

Here, in this remote mountain

In this village of flowering blossoms which seems to be a world unto itself

Lost in it

Is a house in that enchanted land that only those who wander along the mountain path will find.

Those who have lost their way and find themselves at this house can trade their possessions for wealth and longevity

Of course, in reality this family can't give anyone untold wealth or immortality

It's just that in my secret fantasies I imagine that this mother and son aren't quite human
GOOD-NIGHT,
LET'S GO DIGGING FOR BAMBOO SHOOTS TOMORROW.
IT MAY BE TOO EARLY FOR THAT, YOU KNOW

SORRY WE'VE KEPT YOU UP SO LATE
It's already one thirty
HAA...
SO SLEEPY
creak
creak
creak
THAT'S OKAY. I REALLY JUST WANTED TO GO FOR A WALK
OH?
GOOD-NIGHT THEN
IT'S NOT YOUR GUYS' FAULT.
I'LL GO TO BED ONCE I FEEL SLEEPY
IT'S RARE THAT YOU'RE NOT ASLEEP AT THIS HOUR
...OR HAVE YOU TURNED INTO A NIGHT OWL?
NOT REALLY

THIS WON'T DO AT ALL
YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO GO TO BED BY NINE AND GET UP BY FIVE, DON'T YA KNOW?
THAT'S SILLY, HOW CAN I POSSIBLY GO TO BED SO EARLY?
BUT...
I HAVE BEEN GOING TO BED QUITE LATE RECENTLY...
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU GOT GLOOMY ALL OF A SUDDEN...
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN GLOOMY, UNLIKE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.
YOU'RE RIGHT. OUR FAMILY'S WELL-KNOWN FOR BEING RECKLESS

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
IS SOMETHING TROUBLING YOU?
WHY? ARE YOU WILLING TO LEND ME AN EAR?
HA HA
THAT'S RIGHT!
IT'S ALREADY THE 26TH, SO CONGRATULATIONS ON TURNING 17
OF COURSE! I'M THE OLDER BROTHER AFTER ALL!
YUP YUP!
In truth, I'm the one who's been doing all the complaining and confiding...

SURE
RATTLE
IT'S NO BIG DEAL SO GOODNIGHT
Ha ha ha
DON'T BE A STRANGER! TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MY BROTHERLY SPIRIT AND POUR OUT ALL YOUR TROUBLES TO ME WHATEVER THEY MAY BE!
Ha ha
TRUST YOU TO SAY THAT

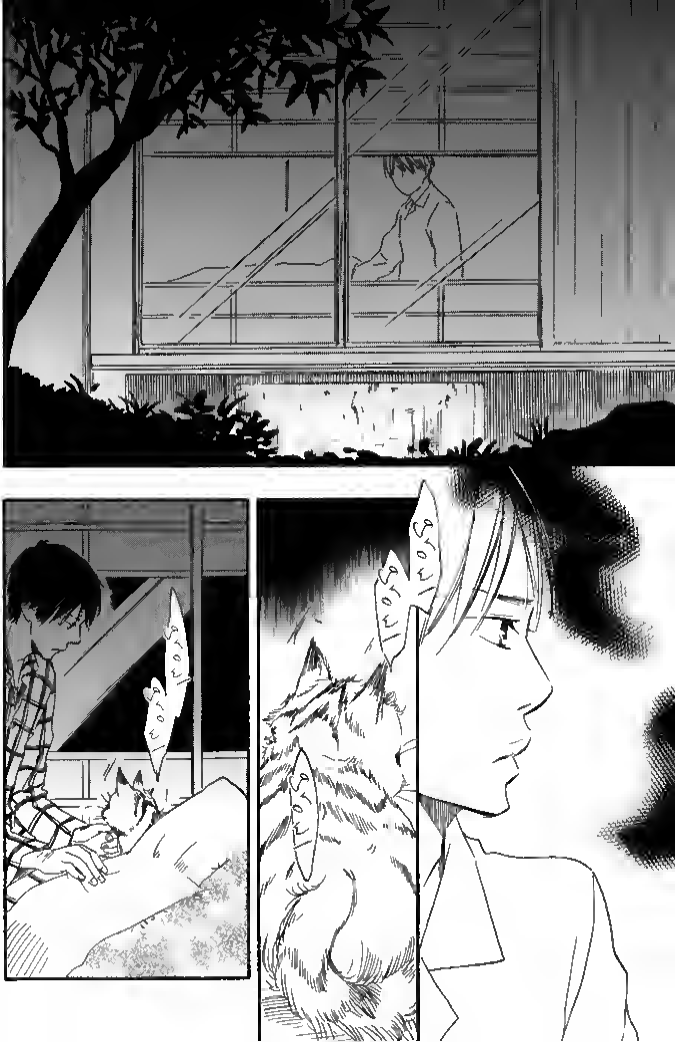
Takashi?

CLOSE

PUSH

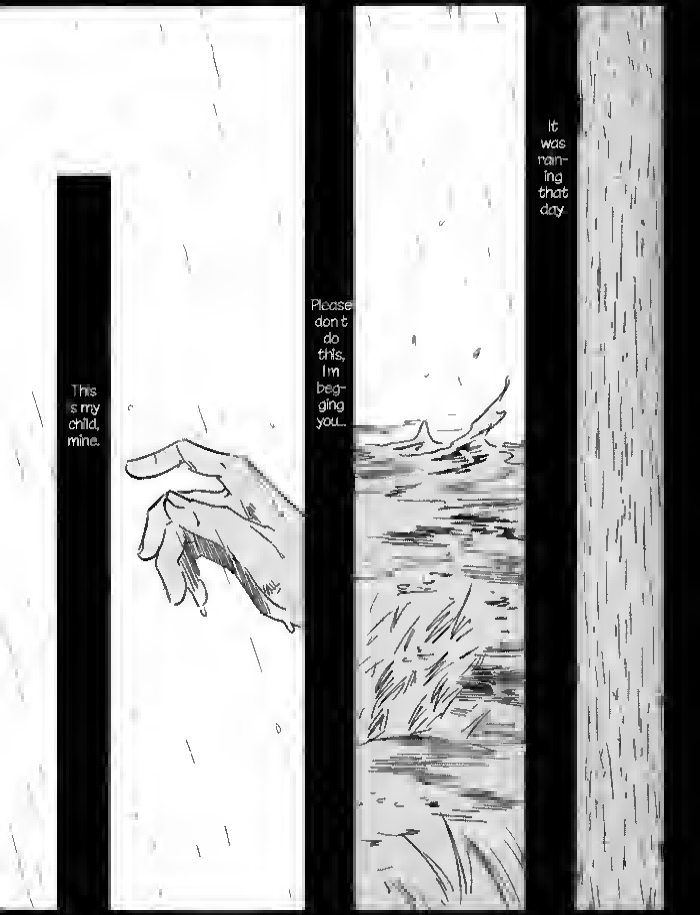
Heh heh.
snuggle

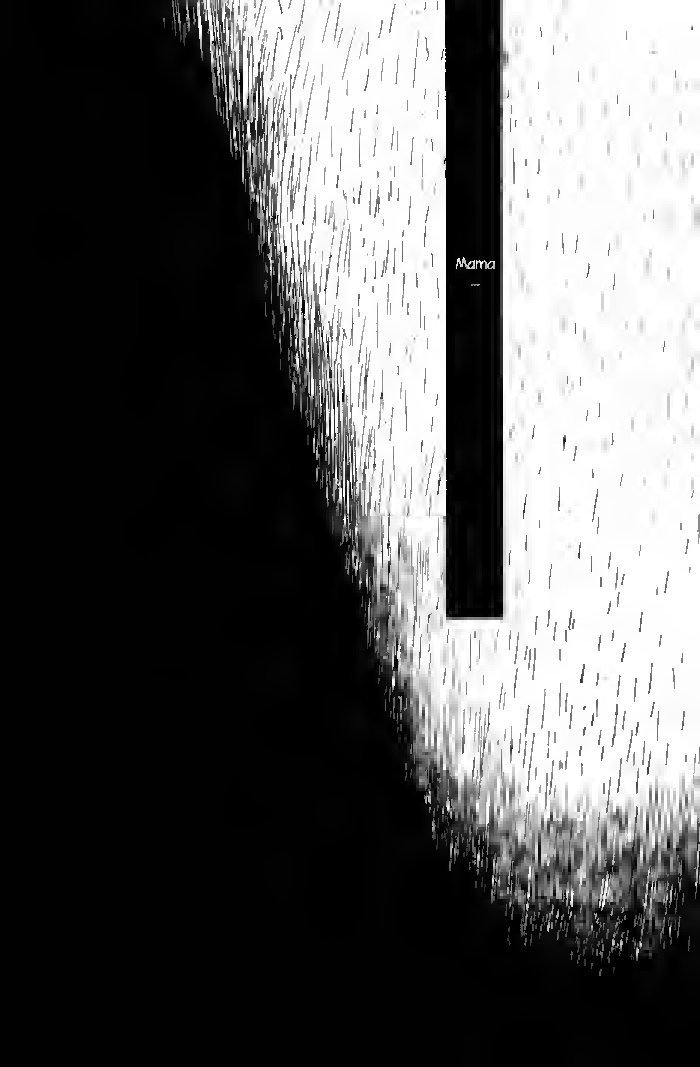
It's here.



snuggle
snuggle
sigh...
IT'S NOTHING

AFTER A WHILE IT'LL GO AWAY
AND THEN I'LL FORGET ABOUT IT...

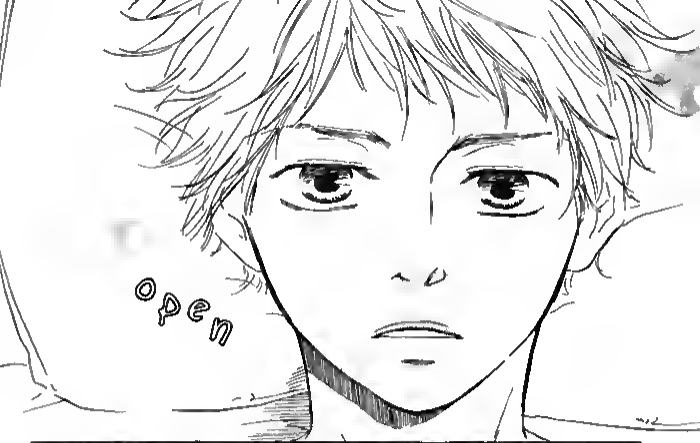

It was rain-ing that day.
Please don't do this, I'm beg-ging you...
This is my child, mine.


Mama

第2話

ARE WE GOING HOME ALREADY?
TUG
WHY?
SO NAOKI-CHAN HAS A STUBBORN SIDE AS WELL
AUNTIE?
ALIKE YOU LOOK ALIKE
WHO?
WHY?

WHO DO I LOOK LIKE?
LIKE SOMEONE I USED TO KNOW A LITTLE BIT
SOMEBODY YOU DON'T KNOW, NAOKI.
HMPH.
AUNTIE SAYS I LOOK LIKE SOMEBODY, MAMA...
MAMA, WHAT'S WRONG?
...MAMA?
SHE SAID THERE'S SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE ME.
NOT IN THE LEAST.
YOU DON'T LOOK ALIKE AT ALL



chirp

Oh...

So Im here.

I think I had a dream last night
CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS ABOUT.
BUT IT SURE WASN'T A NICE ONE
He sort really sad
chirp chirp
MESSY
?
flump
RATTLE
THIS PLACE REALLY IS A WORLD UNTO ITSELF.

YOU'RE LATE
IT'S REALLY HARD TO WAKE UP IN THIS CLOUDY WEATHER
TODAY'S YOUR BIRTHDAY ISN'T IT?
HEH HEH. I'M ALREADY SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD!
OLD MAN
!
Aunt e?

Her expression,
It seems like I've seen it before..
smile
What's got into her?
!?
We're making it!
BE CAREFUL ON YOUR WAY..
WE'RE OFF THEN
Right
t was that time.
佐藤
I'LL BE SEVENTEEN WHEN I COME BACK..

Bliss
http://bliss.diamondfurigan.net

THAT'S IT...!
HUH?
IT REALLY ISN'T THE SEASON YET THEN
OR IS IT THAT THEY'VE ALL BEEN DUG UP? THERE'RE SIGNS OF DIGGING EVERYWHERE
Sigh
NOTHING AGAIN...
NO BAMBOO SHOOTS
REALLY?
BOARS
IT MUST'VE BEEN THE BOARS DIGGING
THAT'S HARD TO SAY
Hey Takeshi
IF WE STAY AROUND THIS AREA, WILL WE SEE SOME BOARS TOO?
WHICH MEANS
WE JUST HAVE TO KEEP DIGGING LIKE THE BOARS DID UNTIL WE FIND SOME!

THE BOARS MIGHT COME OUT ONLY AT NIGHT
BUT DID THE BOARS DIG THESE, OR...
WELL, DID THEY?
OH!
I THINK IT'S PROBABLY THE BOARS LAST YEAR THE FARMER NEARBY COMPLAINED ABOUT THEM STEALING FOOD IN BROAD DAYLIGHT.
Hey!
!!
I found some!
rustle rustle
YOU DID?
TREAT IT AS YOUR BIRTH-DAY PRESENT
YOU CAN DIG THEM UP NAOKI.

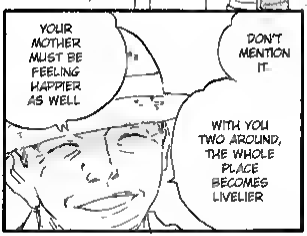
OH HO!
I GUESS IT'S THE TIME FOR YOU TWO TO VISIT AGAIN
IT'S BEEN A WHILE
The summer visitors on Ojiichan's mountain
SORRY WE JUST DUG THESE UP
OH, YOU GOT TO THE SHOOTS BEFORE THE BOARS DID! GOOD, GOOD!
Even to the point of being quite familiar with each other's relations

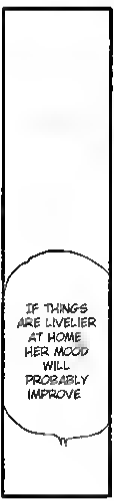
Everyone in this hamlet seems to be part of one big family

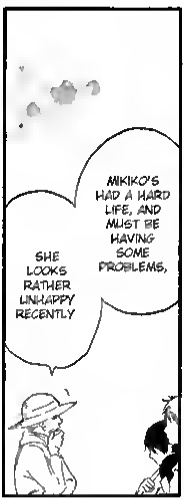
SORRY TO ALWAYS BE GETTING THINGS FROM YOU

RUSTLE
IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT YOU CAN HAVE THE LOT.

THAT'S RIGHT,
I PICKED SOME SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS THIS MORNING


YOUR MOTHER MUST BE FEELING HAPPIER AS WELL
DON'T MENTION IT.
WITH YOU TWO AROUND, THE WHOLE PLACE BECOMES LIVELIER


IF THINGS ARE LIVELIER AT HOME HER MOOD WILL PROBABLY IMPROVE


MIKIKO'S HAD A HARD LIFE, AND MUST BE HAVING SOME PROBLEMS,
SHE LOOKS RATHER UNHAPPY RECENTLY

—HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED?

TAKASHI,
IS AUNTIE UPSET ABOUT SOMETHING?
THE GUY NEXT DOOR SAID SHE WAS
BUT,
I DON'T THINK IT'S ANYTHING SERIOUS
AND SHE LOOKED DEPRESSED AT BREAKFAST TOO
DID YOU KNOW? PEOPLE WITH HIGH IQ SCORES ARE USUALLY OLDER, WHICH MEANS YOU'RE OLD
WELL DUH! MY IQ TEST SCORE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WAS WAY HIGHER THAN YOURS
NORIKO I'M SURPRISED YOU NOTICED IT TOO!
Stupid Noriko! Lose your sassy fart before you say that!
It's called maturity!
I'm youthful on the outside, but I have a woman's heart

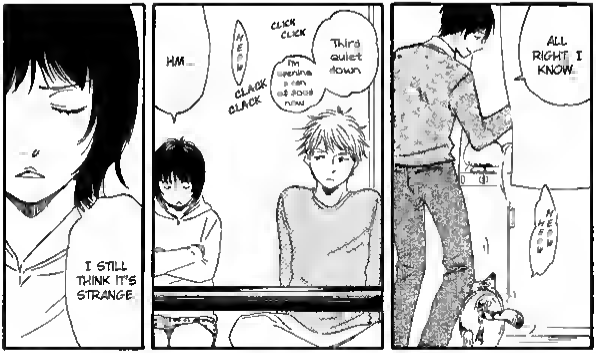
TAKASHI, WHAT'S WRONG?
HUH!?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? BOTH YOU AND AUNTIE ARE ACTING WEIRD
I JUST HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP
JUST TELL US IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM
I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS
DON'T TELL ME IT'S THAT PROBLEM?
Point
IS SOME YAKUZA GUY TRYING TO GET FRESH WITH AUNTIE? OR IS SOME EVIL REAL ESTATE COMPANY EYEING YOUR HOUSE?
HUH ?
WHAT NONSENSE!

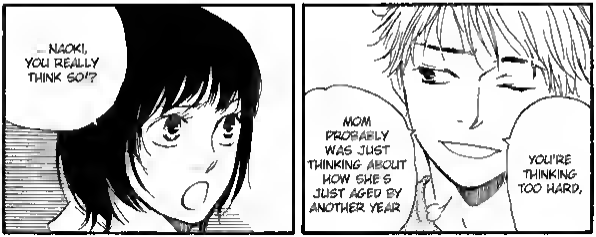
I'VE JUST GOTTEN INTO THE HABIT OF GOING TO BED RATHER LATE RECENTLY.
I'M NOT GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP.
BUT IT'S NOT BECAUSE I'M TROUBLED OR ANYTHING.
WHY YOU...
THOSE ARE THE MOST COMMON PRORLEMS A WIDOW FACES
He he.
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT
Wah! K'you!
WHAT COULD THAT BE ABOUT?
I DON'T KNOW.
SHE JUST SEEMS MOODY RECENTLY.
HOW DO I PUT IT...
IT MAY SOUND A LITTLE STRANGE, BUT SHE SEEMS TO BE REALLY WORRIED ABOUT ME GETTING OLDER.
MY MOTHER THOUGH...
WHAT ABOUT HER?

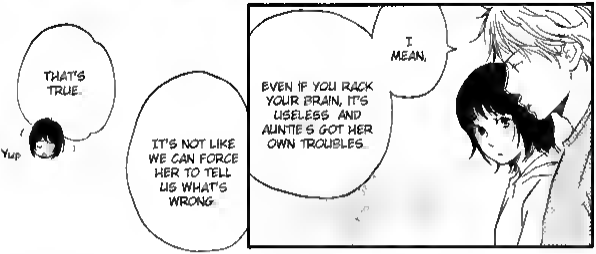
MY MOTHER... SHE SEEMS RELUCTANT TO SEE ME TURN SEVENTEEN
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY. IT'S JUST THAT SHE SEEMS UNHAPPY ABOUT IT...
WHAT ON EARTH DOES THAT MEAN?
JUST LIKE OUR MUM...
!?
DIDN'T MUM HAVE THE SAME EXPRESSION?
WHEN WE WERE LEAVING, SHE WAS IN A STRANGE MOOD...
This girl's really observant.

FINALLY?
I THOUGHT THAT WAS A STRANGE THING TO SAY TOO...
ACTUALLY, SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED BEFORE
IT WAS WHEN I ASKED HER WHAT WE SHOULD GET AS A BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR NAOKI,
AND SHE SAID, "NAOKI'S FINALLY TURNING SEVENTEEN TOO."
BUT NOWADAYS PEOPLE SURELY AREN'T IN THE REBELLIOUS PHASE AT SEVENTEEN.
BUT WHEN I ASKED HER WHAT WAS UNUSUAL ABOUT TURNING SEVENTEEN ALL SHE SAID WAS "IT'S A REBELLIOUS AGE..."
THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY!
WHAT IS?
MUM TOOK OUT EVERYTHING OF YOURS THAT SHE HAD KEPT.
BUT IF IT WAS TO CLEAN OUT THE CLOSET, THEN SHE WOULD HAVE DONE IT DURING NEW YEAR'S.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THAT'S REALLY STRANGE TOO
RIGHT...

MEOW
MEOW


I STILL THINK IT'S STRANGE
HM...
MEOW
CLACK CLACK
CLICK CLICK
This's quiet down
I'm working so can be bold now!
ALL RIGHT I KNOW...
MEOW


...NAOKI, YOU REALLY THINK SO!?
MOM PROBABLY WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT HOW SHE'S JUST AGED BY ANOTHER YEAR
YOU'RE THINKING TOO HARD,


THAT'S TRUE...
YUP
IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN FORCE HER TO TELL US WHAT'S WRONG
I MEAN,
EVEN IF YOU RACK YOUR BRAIN, IT'S USELESS AND AUNTIE'S GOT HER OWN TROUBLES...

That this place, cut off from one world is the entrance to another...

So Nori'ko had the same feeling I did.

Wow!
RICE WITH BAMBOO SHOOTS!
THEY TASTE BETTER BECAUSE THEY'RE OUR OWN BAMBOO SHOOTS
THEY'RE NOT YOURS, THEY'RE FROM THE NEIGHBOR'S
HE SAID WE COULD DIG FOR THEM
That quiet tranquil smile
Auntie hasn't changed.
SPEAKING OF WHICH,
DIDN'T YOU SAY THEY WERE MINE?
THESE BAMBOO SHOOTS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT...

Oh no..
Anyway!
THE COUNTRYSIDE IS GREAT, THERE'S SO MUCH GOOD FOOD ALL AROUND ♡
Quick thinking, Noriko
I WANT TO COME IN AUTUMN TOO YOU HAVE CHESTNUTS THEN, RIGHT? ♡
WE DO, BUT NO ONE LOOKS AFTER THEM HERE SO THE WORMS JUST GNAW AT THEM
I HAVE TO AGREE WITH YOU ON THAT

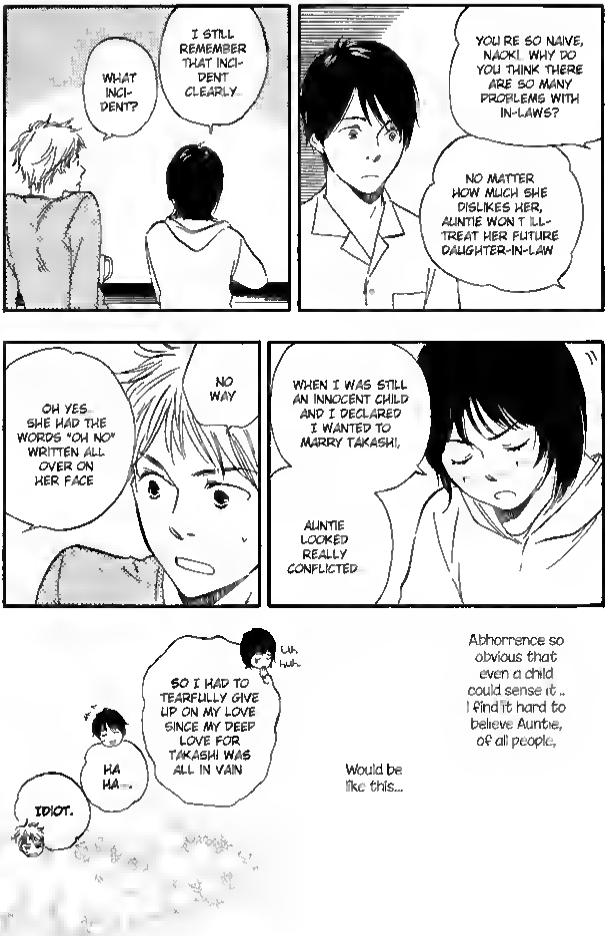
IF YOU LIKE IT SO MUCH YOU MAY AS WELL MOVE HERE FOR GOOD.
THIS PLACE IS BEAUTIFUL WITH ITS BEAUTIFUL SCENERY AND FRESH AIR.
YOU THINK OF NOTHING BUT FOOD.
THAT'S OKAY, JUST RICE WITH CHESTNUTS WILL BE FINE.
WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WANTED TO MARRY TAKASHI?
EXCUSE ME.
TAKASHI'S THE ONLY PERSON WHO WOULD DARE TO MARRY YOU. HE'S SUCH A NICE GUY HE'LL ACCEPT ANYTHING.
THAT WAY YOU CAN BEG TAKASHI TO MARRY YOU.
TYPICAL TAKASHI!
YOUR SELF-SACRIFICING SPIRIT IS TRULY MOVING! CONGRATS, NORIKO, YOUR FIRST CRUSH HAS BLOSSOMED INTO LOVE!
...TAKASHI WOULD PUT UP WITH YOU, I'M SURE.
I DON'T MIND PROVIDED NORIKO'S STILL INTERESTED IN THIS VILLAGE WHEN SHE GROWS UP.

SHE'S ONLY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL
...DON'T BE PICKING ON NORI-CHAN.
BESIDES, TAKASHI ISN'T AT THE AGE WHEN HE'S THINKING ABOUT SUCH THINGS EITHER.
...ER,
YEAH.
NORIKO IS CITY BORN AND BRED WHEN SHE'S OLDER, SHE'S BOUND TO FEEL THAT SOMEONE FROM THE CITY IS BETTER
AS FOR SOMETHING SO FAR AHEAD IN THE FUTURE
HOW COULD SHE POSSIBLY KNOW NOW WHAT SHE

BROTHER YOU IDIOT!
THAT KIND OF HURT MY FEELINGS
At last, that rather awkward dinner was over
After the table was cleared, Auntie disappeared immediately into her room
SORRY,
I DON'T THINK MY MOTHER MEANT ANYTHING WHEN SHE SAID THOSE THINGS THOUGH
I APOLO-GIZE ANYWAY
ALTHOUGH I DON'T THINK SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT YOU SPECIFICALLY, NORI-CHAN
...YEAH
MAYBE IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH HER BEING DEPRESSED RECENTLY
SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE AGE THING?

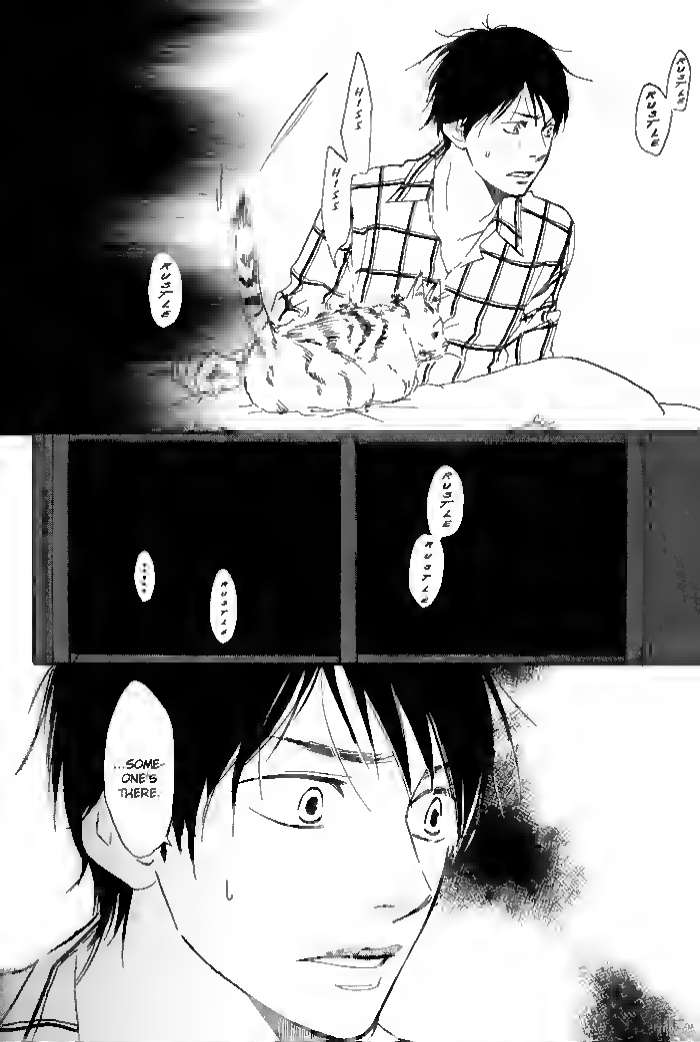
I DON'T MIND REALLY!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TAKASHI-CHAN!
IT'S MY IDIOT BROTHER'S FAULT FOR BEING TOO FULL OF HIMSELF. I'M REALLY OKAY
SHE MUST BE WORRIED OVER SOMETHING ELSE,
I'M SORRY, NORI-CHAN

AFTER ALL, IN A SINGLE-MOTHER HOUSEHOLD, AUNTIE CAN'T HELP BUT BE A BIT TOUCHY ABOUT MARRIAGE
I STILL SAY YOU'RE THINKING TOO HARD!
HM...
SHE IS BEHAVING RATHER ODDLY
I WAS JUST REALLY SURPRISED THAT AUNTIE WOULD SAY SUCH A THING


I STILL REMEMBER THAT INCIDENT CLEARLY...
WHAT INCIDENT?
YOU'RE SO NAIVE, NAOKI. WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE SO MANY PROBLEMS WITH IN-LAWS?
NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHE DISLIKES HER, AUNTIE WON'T ILL-TREAT HER FUTURE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW
NO WAY
OH YES... SHE HAD THE WORDS "OH NO" WRITTEN ALL OVER ON HER FACE
WHEN I WAS STILL AN INNOCENT CHILD AND I DECLARED I WANTED TO MARRY TAKASHI,
AUNTIE LOOKED REALLY CONFLICTED...
SO I HAD TO TEARFULLY GIVE UP ON MY LOVE SINCE MY DEEP LOVE FOR TAKASHI WAS ALL IN VAIN
UH, HUH...
HA HA...
IDIOT.
Abhorrence so obvious that even a child could sense it.. I find it hard to believe Auntie, of all people,
Would be like this...

IT APPEARS EVERY NIGHT AFTER TWO IN THE MORNING.
IT MUST BE THE BOARS...
WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT NOW IS MOTHER'S PROBLEMS.

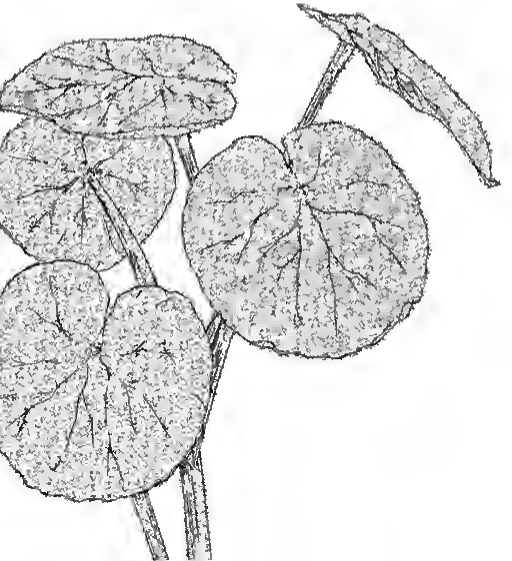
Perk
Growl...
Growl...
Rustle


HISS
HISS
HISS
HISS
HISS
HISS
HISS
HISS
...SOMEONE'S THERE.

THAT LAST SOUND...
THAT WAS THE SOUND OF A HUMAN'S
shiver
LISTENING TO THE FOOTFALL
THE GAIT...
WHY
UP UNTIL TODAY THERE WAS NO SIGN THAT IT WAS REMOTELY HUMAN
IS IT HUMAN? WAS IT ALWAYS HUMAN?
lick
lick

ZZ...
ZZ...
SNOCK
SNOCK
NO IT CAN'T BE
IF IT WAS HUMAN THE THIRD WOULDN'T BE SO HOSTILE
SHE MAY ONLY PREFER MY COMPANY BUT SHE'S NEVER HOSTILE TO PEOPLE
.....

第3話



TAKASHI,
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK LISTLESS
RECENTLY
THINGS HAVE BEEN RATHER STRANGE
That's right. I heard that Takashi was up just a little earlier than me today
That's unusual given he wakes up early just like an old man
DO I?
YOUR EYES ARE BLOOD-SHOT TOO. DIDN'T YOU GET ENOUGH SLEEP?

DID YOU HIT PUBERTY, OR WHAT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT
Splash
Splash
DON'T STOP TALKING ONCE YOU'VE STARTED. IT'S ANNOYING.
EXACTLY
— IT'S REALLY NOTHING, FORGET IT

AH!
IT'S ALMOST NOON
I WANT TO PICK A FEW MORE TARO ROOTS BEFORE GOING BACK
ME TOO
THEN I'LL TAKE THESE BACK FIRST

...GO ON
SIT
I DIDN'T WANT TO MENTION THIS AROUND NORI-CHAN.
I KNOW.
...AT NIGHT,
SOMETHING STRANGE HAPPENS

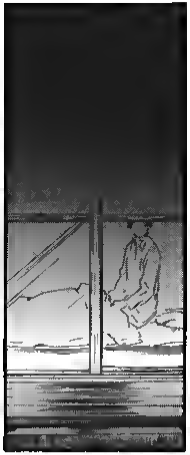
NAOKI, HAVE YOU NOTICED ANYTHING STRANGE ABOUT MY HOUSE OR SEEN SOMETHING STRANGE...
WELL HAVE YOU?
I MEAN...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SOMETHING STRANGE... YOU MEAN LIKE THIS?
Whoooo
YOU HAVE?
NOD

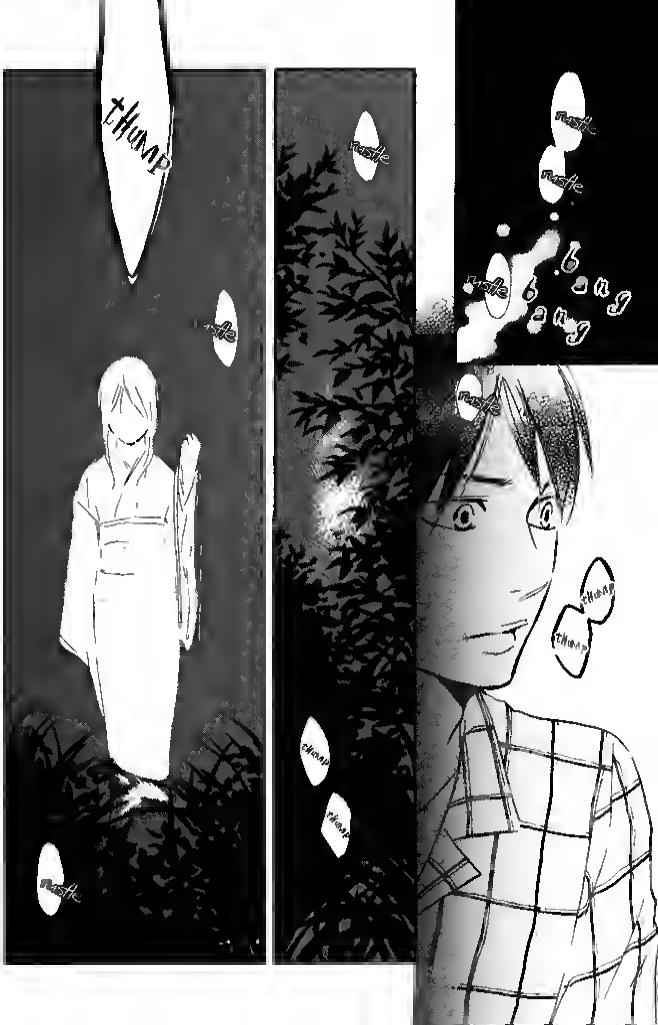
DON'T TELL ME THAT'S ALL,
THAT'S WHAT'S CAUSING YOU TO LOSE SLEEP?
He he he he
SUCH THINGS CAN'T POSSIBLY EXIST!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
Bwa ha ha ha
SO TELL ME,
WHAT DID YOU SEE?
A GHOST, DEMON OR A SPIRIT?
THAT'S IT?
FOR NOW, YES.
I FEEL THERE'S SOMEONE THERE.
IT'S JUST A FEELING THAT I HAVE

FORGET IT.
THERE, THERE, DON'T BE SCARED,
DO YOU WANT YOUR BIG BROTHER TO SLEEP IN YOUR ROOM TONIGHT? HM?
PAT
WHAT? YOU'RE SERIOUS?
FORGET IT
splash
splash
TAKA-SHI?

Was he serious? Should I ask him more seriously...?
...Forget it it's probably nothing.

grow!
grow!
grow!




rustle
rustle
rustle
bang
bang
rustle
thump
thump
thump
rustle
rustle
THUMP
rustle
rustle

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THAT'S NOT A HUMAN
NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT

rustle
rustle
rustle
!?
BANG
THUMP
Ha
Ha
thump
thump
thump
Ha
Ha...
Ha
Ha
Ha
Ha
rustle
rustle
G
GOTTA
RUN

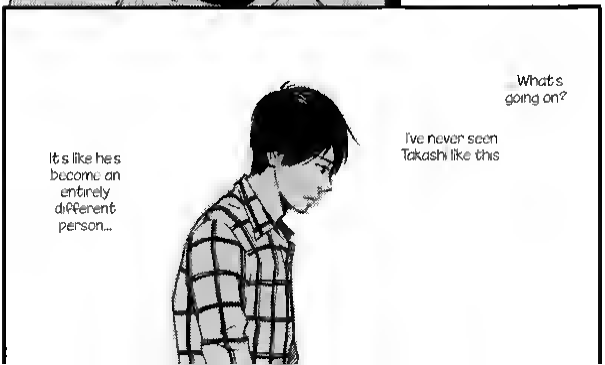
KNOCK
THIS WOMAN—
I HAVE TO RUN AWAY
KNOCK
KNOCK
I KNOW HER.
WH WHAT?

GOOD MORNING,
HUH? WHERE'S TAKASHI?
HE'S STILL IN BED, I DON'T KNOW WHY,
THAT CHILD HAS BEEN WAKING UP LATE RECENTLY.
AT THIS AGE EVEN HONOR STUDENTS CAN BE CORRUPTED!
Hehe
I'M DIGGING IN!
SLAP
GLUTTON!
GO SEE IF TAKASHI'S AWAKE.

Come to think of it, this is the first time Takashi's woken up later than me. How strange.
Noriko-chan's brat.
HONESTLY...
creak
creak
CREAK
Right...
CREAK
...HOW COULD IT BE?
I'M SURE THAT'S NOT IT.
He said some really strange things yesterday.
I feel something.

HEY, TAKA-SHI!
I'M COMING IN
RATTLE
TAKASHI?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? IT'S TIME FOR BREAK-FAST

IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING WELL...
I'LL BE THERE SOON
TWIN
Something's strange here
ARE YOU NOT FEELING WELL OR SOMETHING?
I'M FINE!


It's like he's become an entirely different person...
I've never seen Takashi like this
What's going on?

Yeah.
Something's wrong.
What could possibly be wrong? It's just Takashi, sitting right in front of me!
How could that be...?
I SAID I'LL BE THERE IN A MINUTE
SORRY YOU HAD TO COME CALL ME

SURE
That's the Takashi I know.
Nothing's different about him.
How could I think he was different?
TAKASHI ARE YOU NOT FEELING WELL?
NO, I JUST OVERSLEPT, THAT'S ALL.
I'M SORRY.
I'm digging in!
Noriko, you didn't eat my share of you?

THIRD, HAVE YOU HAD YOUR BREAKFAST?
YOU PROBABLY HAVE.
MEOW MEOW.
TAKASHI-CHAN, HOW COULD YOU FEED THE THIRD WHEN SHE'S ON A DIET?
IT'S JUST A BITE.
THAT'S GOING TO MAKE HER FAT! GOOD THING SHE DIDN'T TAKE IT.
SNIFF SNIFF
!?
TURN
HERE.

Is something really wrong?
TAKASHI-CHAN,
YOU LOOK REALLY OFF TODAY
YOUR QUESTIONS ARE MAKING ME FEEL LIKE AN INVALID
YOU LOOK REALLY AWFUL THOUGH, ARE YOU SURE?
NO NEED, I'M FINE REALLY
ARE YOU FEELING UNWELL?
DO I...?
DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK AND SLEEP FOR A BIT?

YOU LOOK LIKE ONE
TAKASHI ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE WELL?
YOU'RE IMAGINING THINGS

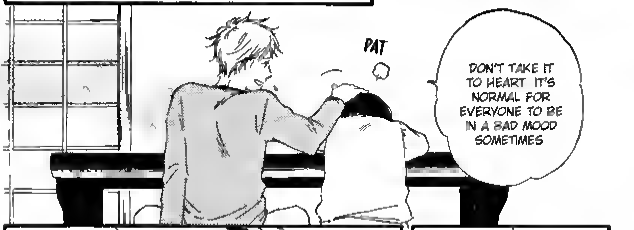
BECAUSE YOU REALLY LOOK UNWELL
WHY?
I'M FINE, REALLY
IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF THE LIGHTING
NO IT ISN'T
WHY NOT GO AND SLEEP FOR A WHILE?
YOU'RE REALLY PALE
DO YOU HAVE A FEVER...

slap
CAN'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE?
TAKA-SHI!?
!

SORRY.
BUT I'M FINE. I'M JUST IN A BAD MOOD. I'M GOING OUTSIDE FOR SOME FRESH AIR
creak creak creak
WHAT THE HECK DID HE DO THAT FOR?
WHY HAS IT SUDDENLY BECOME LIKE THIS?
AUNTIE?
Aunt Mikiko looks so shocked.
Ah,
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
Such a faint voice...
YES.
HAS SOME-THING HAP-PENED?
NOTHING NOTHING'S WRONG
This isn't normal.

I HATE THIS...

I'M SO SORRY... HE MUST BE IN A BAD MOOD, THAT'S ALL

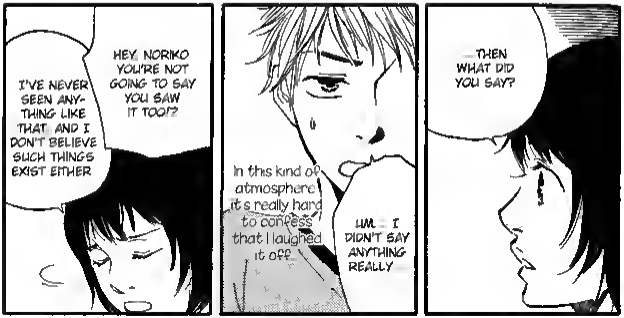

PAT
DON'T TAKE IT TO HEART. IT'S NORMAL FOR EVERYONE TO BE IN A BAD MOOD SOMETIMES

THAT WASN'T HIM BEING UPSET...
TAKASHI'S HUMAN TOO SO OF COURSE HE GETS UPSET
IT WAS MORE LIKE HE TURNED INTO SOME-ONE ELSE

A BAD MOOD? TAKASHI?
turn

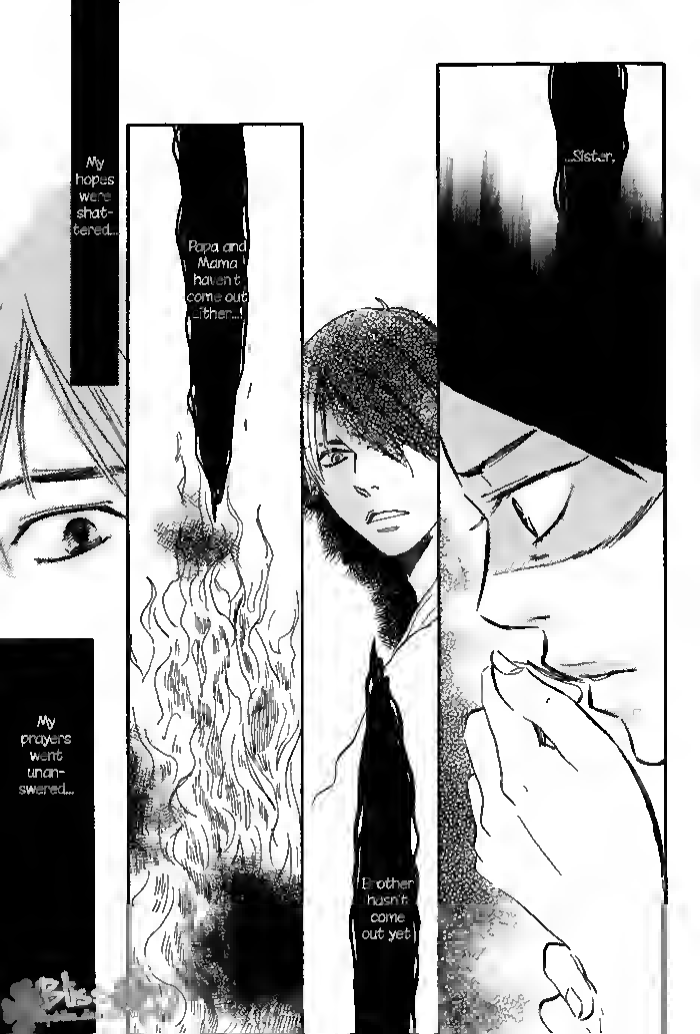
But,
the Takashi I know has never used that tone of voice before
How can that be? That's going too far
...Someone else?
TAKASHI MUST BE IN BAD MOOD, THAT'S ALL
HE SEEMS TO BE WORRYING ABOUT SOMETHING AND IT'S CAUSING HIM TO LOSE SLEEP
Something's wrong...
I ASKED HIM YESTERDAY WHY HE COULDN'T SLEEP AND HE WOULDN'T ANSWER.
THEN I SAW HIM GIVE YOU A LOOK!
DIDN'T YOU ASK HIM ABOUT IT!? I EVEN MADE MYSELF SCARCE ON PURPOSE
!?
WHAT?
BANG
DID TAKASHI SAY ANYTHING TO YOU YESTERDAY?
THAT'S IT!

I'd don't want to mention this around Noriko..
WHAT DID HE SAY?
This brat is always surprising me..
She's really sharp
HE TOLD ME BUT...
UM, WELL
.....
HE SAID THAT WILL APPEAR.
HUH?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW MYSELF, BUT HE SAID HE FEELS LIKE A PERSON WILL APPEAR
THAT...? YOU MEAN A GHOST?
YOU KNOW THAT TAKASHI SAID IT APPEARS AT NIGHT


I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THAT, AND I DON'T BELIEVE SUCH THINGS EXIST EITHER
HEY, NORIKO YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SAY YOU SAW IT TOO?
In this kind of atmosphere, it's really hard to confess that I laughed it off.
UM... I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING REALLY
THEN WHAT DID YOU SAY?

BUT TAKASHI MUST HAVE HIS REASONS FOR SAYING THAT
AL-THOUGH,
I WOULD LAUGH IF ANY OF MY CLASSMATES SAID SOMETHING LIKE THAT
Forget it
Takashi wouldn't joke about such things...
Why...
Why didn't it occur to me...?

SHE TURNED SO PALE...
AND AUNTIE'S BEEN ACTING ODDLY TOO...
"Can't you just leave me alone?"
IT ISN'T...
IT ISN'T ...
...IT CAN'T BE,

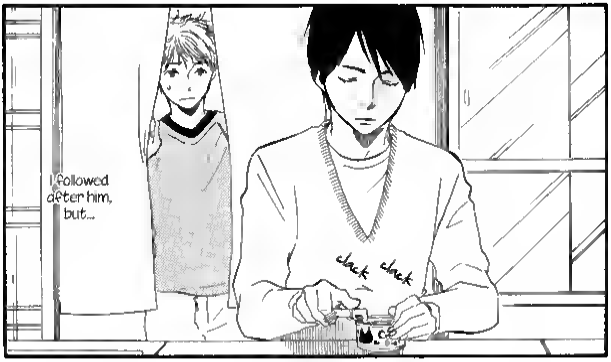

My hopes were shattered...
Papa and Mama haven't come out either...!
...Sister,
My prayers went unanswered...
Brother hasn't come out yet!

Takashi is seventeen.

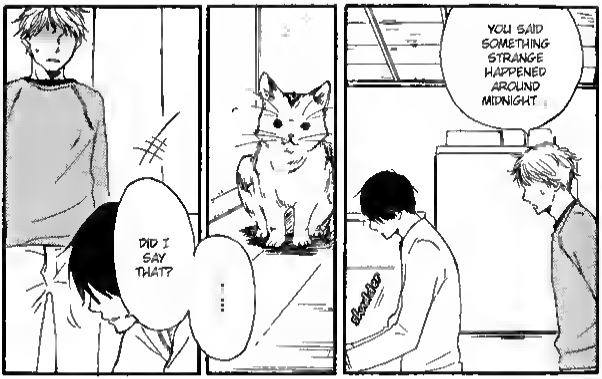
Naoki is seventeen.

...That fateful spring has come.

第4話
"Just leave me alone"
"I don't feel well so I'm going outside to get some fresh air"
After that, Takashi didn't come back,
until dinner time.


I followed after him, but...
click
click

第4話


DID I SAY THAT?
.....
YOU SAID SOMETHING STRANGE HAPPENED AROUND MIDNIGHT
Bzzzzzz

!?
I WAS JUST PULLING YOUR LEG
YOU SAID SOMETHING "APPEARS", THAT
HEY!
Ah
Sigh

YOU BELIEVED ME?
He he
WHY YOU...
Cat Diet
flinch
COME HERE THIRD
I

WHAT'S WRONG?
...DID YOU EAT WHILE YOU WERE OUTSIDE?
Sigh
retreat
COME HERE
...Something's wrong...

It's still that same warm, gentle smile...
But
Something's not right
Something feels different
What feeling is this..?
I WAS JUST PULLING YOUR LEG
IT'S BECAUSE YOU LOOKED SO SERIOUS
It's impossible
but when you calm down and think about it_

WITHOUT HAVING HER DINNER?
SHE PROBABLY ATE EARLIER
– THAT'S WHY I SAID PUTTING HER ON A DIET IS POINTLESS
Ha ha ha that's true
It's dinnertime~
HUH? WHERE'S THE THIRD?
SHE WENT OUTSIDE
After that,
At dinner, Takashi didn't say a word.
And he wouldn't look at Aunty.
And although he smiled and answered Noriko and me,
It was a perfunctory effort.

Slurp
Creak
Creak..
!
THANKS FOR THE MEAL
Rattle
I'm to follow him again..
THANKS FOR THE MEAL
YOU'RE ALREADY FINISHED?
YEAH.. I'M NOT REALLY HUNGRY TODAY..
BUT I'M SURE I'LL BE HUNGRY LATER.
SO I'LL HAVE TO TROUBLE YOU FOR A MIDNIGHT SNACK

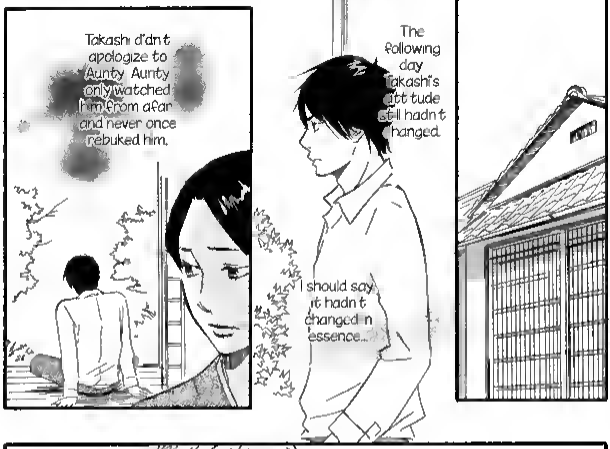
I'M SORRY...
TAKASHI!
WAIT UP!
WHAT?

A mocking tone!
THEN WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? WHY ARE YOU ANGRY WITH AUNTY?
OF COURSE NOT!
REALLY? ANY SIGN OF A FEVER?
NO, I SAID I'M FINE LOTS OF TIMES
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT FEELING ILL?
AND THIS AFTERNOON. DON'T YOU THINK YOU WERE TOO MUCH? AUNTY LOOKED AS IF SHE WOULD CRY
JUST NOW AT DINNER, YOU TREATED AUNTY AS THOUGH SHE WAS INVISIBLE
ALTHOUGH I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, I HOPE YOU'LL DROP THAT ATTITUDE
I'M NOT
HEY. TAKASHI

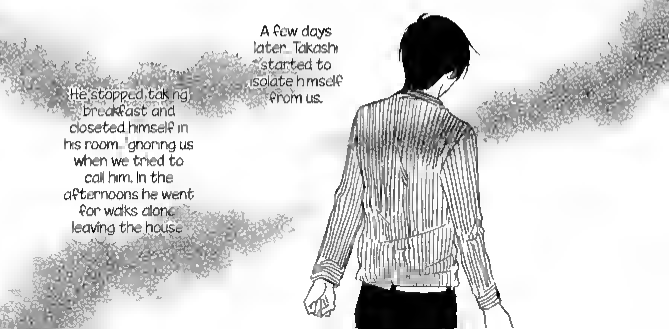
IT'S A REALLY BAD ATTITUDE.
Snicker
NAOKI, YOU'RE OFTEN LIKE THAT YOURSELF.
THAT'S BECAUSE WE'RE CONCERNED ABOUT YOU. YOU REALLY OUGHT TO APOLOGIZE TO AUNTY.
BEING IN A BAD MOOD IS UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT SURELY YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO SLAP HER HAND AWAY?
BUT YOU GUYS KEPT TREATING ME AS IF I WAS ILL.
I WAS JUST IN A BAD MOOD,
REALLY?
OF COURSE! EVEN I WAS TAKEN ABACK BY YOUR BEHAVIOR.
WE'RE DIFFERENT. YOUR BEHAVIOR IS WORRYING.
THAT SORT OF ATTITUDE DOESN'T SUIT SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
SO WHAT.
...Huh?
BUT YOU REALLY UPSET AUNTY THIS AFTERNOON.
SHE TURNED REALLY PALE. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN BADLY AFFECTED BY IT.
—YOU KNOW, RIGHT. THAT I DON'T MEAN TO BLAME YOU.

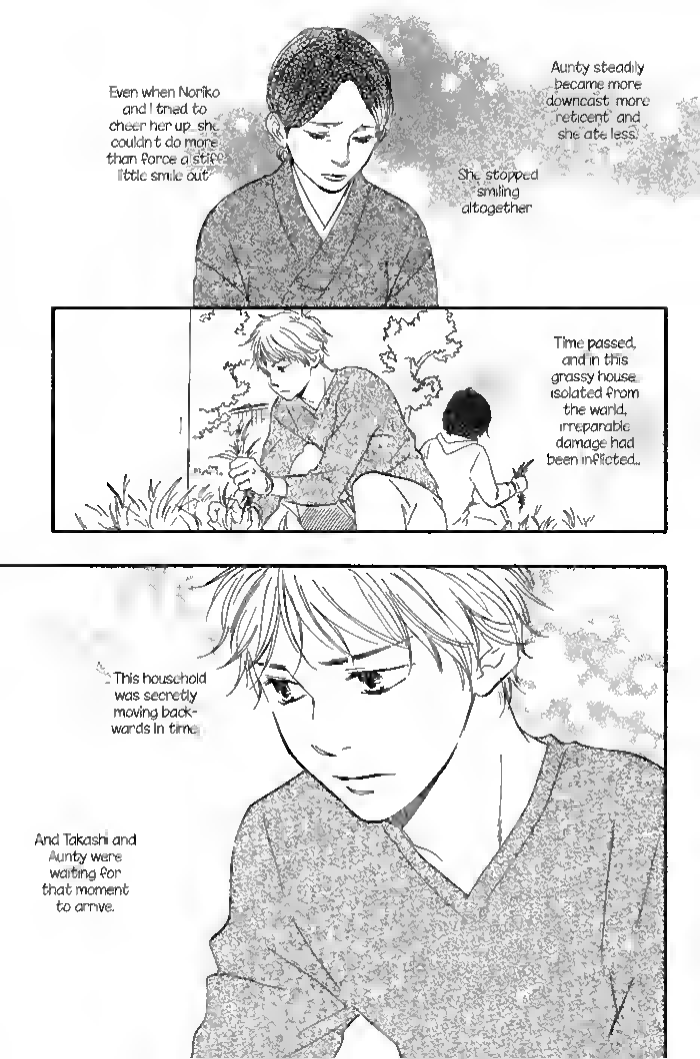
...THAT TYPE OF...
...WOMAN
This type of smile, it's more of a sneer isn't it?
TAKASHI?
What's the expression behind that?
A strange forced smile
That's not a genuine smile...

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
...WHAT TYPE OF WOMAN?
AH... SORRY, THAT CAME OUT BADLY
...Just what...
YOU...
BUT, IT'S A FACT THAT SHE'S A WOMAN.
turn
Is going on?


Takashi didn't apologize to Aunty. Aunty only watched him from afar and never once rebuked him.
The following day Takashi's attitude still hadn't changed.
I should say it hadn't changed in essence...

reduced to worrying about mother and son.
Even Noriko and I found ourselves at a loss.


A few days later. Takashi started to isolate himself from us.
He stopped taking breakfast and closeted himself in his room, ignoring us when we tried to call him. In the afternoons he went for walks alone, leaving the house

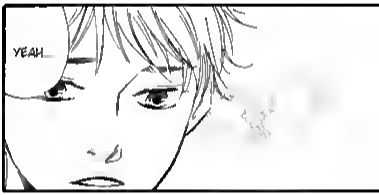

Even when Noriko and I tried to cheer her up, she couldn't do more than force a stiff little smile out.
Aunty steadily became more downcast, more reticent, and she ate less.
She stopped smiling altogether.
Time passed, and in this grassy house, isolated from the world, irreparable damage had been inflicted...
This household was secretly moving backwards in time.
And Takashi and Aunty were waiting for that moment to arrive.

The days slipped away April was upon us,
and the sound of conversation had all but disappeared from our daily lives.
CREAK
CAN I COME IN BROTHER?
With bated breath,
and mutual surveillance,
they both waited for something

OH... SO YOU WANT YOUR BIG BROTHER TO COMFORT YOU?
YUP.
stick
NOTHING REALLY, JUST FEELING A LITTLE DOWN
WHAT'S UP?
flop
...HEY,
YOU'RE REALLY FEELING DOWN.
YEAH

NOT THIS AGAIN
I REALLY LIKE THIS HOME
I KNOW, BUT...
I REALLY DO LIKE IT HERE. I'VE ALWAYS FELT THAT THIS WAS A WORLD STRAIGHT OUT OF A FAIRY TALE

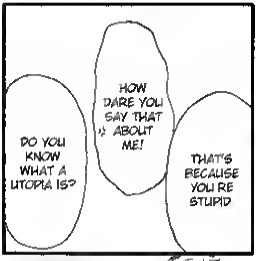
WHAT HAPPENED TO THIS FAMILY?


YEAH...

EVEN THOUGH THERE'RE JUST WEEDS EVERYWHERE, AUNTY SEEMED JUST LIKE A QUEEN, AND TAKASHI-CHAN A PRINCE, TO ME
...WHAT AN IMAGE
YOU'RE STILL SO CHILDISH
...I HATE HOW THINGS HAVE TURNED OUT

HEY!
MY CHEST REALLY HURTS
thump

IT WOULD BE GOOD IF WE COULD HELP.
BUT YOU AND I ARE OUTSIDERS AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE WANT TO HELP WE CAN'T INTERFERE


DO YOU KNOW WHAT A UTOPIA IS?
HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT :) ABOUT ME!
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU RE STUPID

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THIS PLACE WAS IDYLLIC

THE MEANING?
AND THE MEANING OF UTOPIA?
THIS PLACE IS MY IDEA OF UTOPIA
OF COURSE I DO

IN GREEK UTOPIA MEANS "NO-PLACE"
—BROTHER I NEVER DREAMED YOU WOULD KNOW ABOUT SOMETHING SO PROFOUND
—IT WAS TAKASHI WHO TOLD ME

DO YOU WANT TO GO HOME?
GO HOME WITH THINGS AS THEY ARE NOW? LEAVING AUNTY BEHIND?
EVEN THOUGH IT'S A LITTLE EARLIER THAN WE'D PLANNED...
THINGS MAY GET BETTER IF WE'RE NOT HERE

!
WHAT IF THEY GET WORSE?
WORSE...?
MAYBE OUR BEING HERE HAS PREVENTED THINGS FROM GETTING WORSE
But what if the things they do next aren't helping to heal this rift...?
There's a high probability that because we're here, they're unable to heal this rift
I feel this mother and son are facing a huge rift and all we can do is stand by and watch

...TAKA-SHI.
CAN I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?
And when we come here again in summer,
things will have returned to their normal peaceful state, surely.
After we go home, they'll definitely spend some time trying to patch up their differences.
Why would they let things worsen?
What am I thinking.
No way

ALTHOUGH IT'S A LITTLE EARLIER THAN PLANNED...
WE'VE DECIDED TO GO HOME
ALTHOUGH WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED, BUT IF WE'RE NOT HERE...
THAT SHOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU AND ALINTY TO SORT THINGS OUT
HUH?
HA HA HA HA.
SURELY NOT?
ARE YOU SURE IT'S NOT BECAUSE IT'S BECOME SO GLOOMY THAT YOU CAN'T STAND IT AND YOU WANT TO ESCAPE?
ugh...
...THAT'S RIGHT.
AND WHOSE FAULT DO YOU THINK IT IS?

IT'S ALL THAT WOMAN'S FAULT
WHY?
NO. IT'S NOT.
IT IS YOUR FAULT!
YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE IT'S ALL MY FAULT.
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING!?
NOTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW.

LOOK AT ME
He he
SOMETHING YOU CAN'T FATHOM
I TOLD YOU TO LOOK AT ME!
SMA
CK
TAKA-SHI!
bang

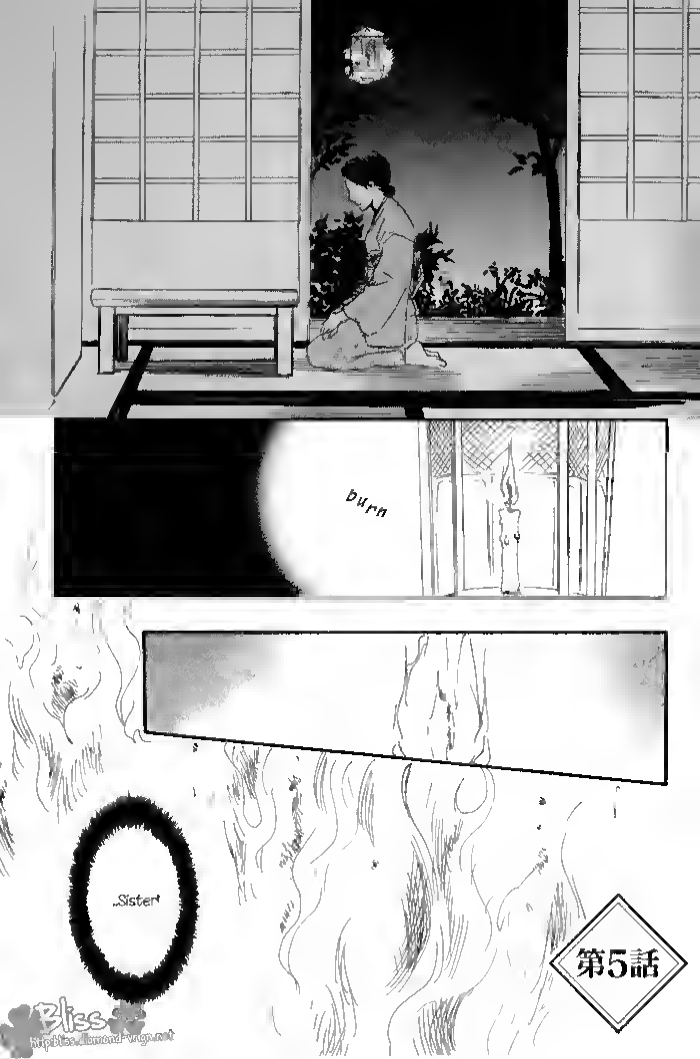
WAIT
shove push
thud
whup
RAM
slide
SWIP

CLATTER
CLATTER
clunk
clunk
crash
clink
clink
THAT HURTS
OW...
Dash
Dash
Dash
WHY ARE YOU BOTHERED ABOUT WHAT GOES ON IN THIS FAMILY ANYWAY?
WHY NOT LEAVE IT ALONE? IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS IS IT?
SHUT UP...

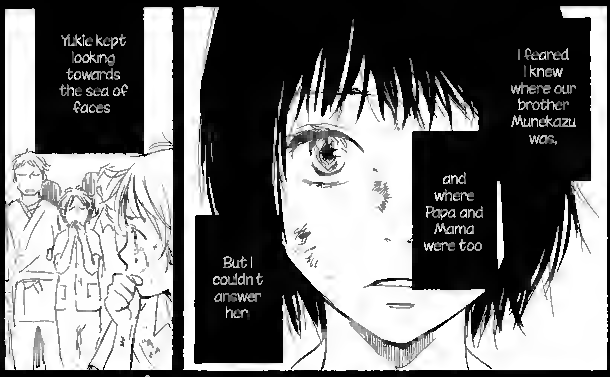
WHAT HAPPENED!?

turn
Thud
Thud
Thud

...It's all that woman's fault.
...Nothing you need to know.
...ow
What's going on? Takashi, what are you thinking...
...Something you can't fathom.


Burn
...Sister!
第5話

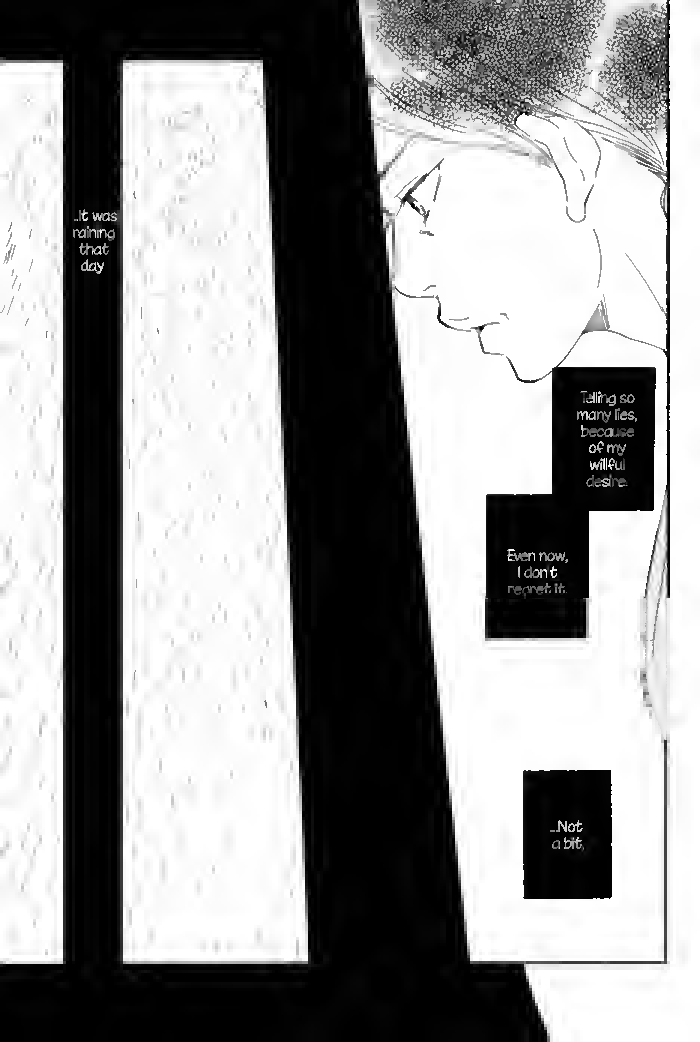
MEMORY
Mikiko brother didn't come out
Papa and Mama didn't come out either...!


Yukie kept looking towards the sea of faces
But I couldn't answer her.
I feared I knew where our brother Munekazu was,
and where Papa and Mama were too

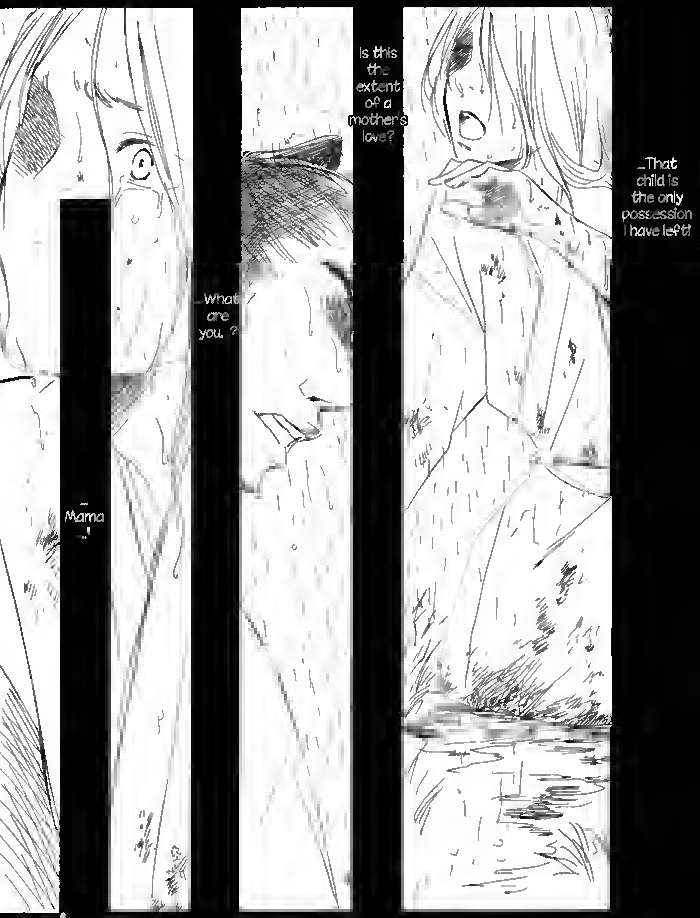
Not long after, we were placed in the care of our relatives but our uncle and aunt never talked about this matter either

That was the last time. Afterwards we never talked about what happened to Brother, Papa and Mama

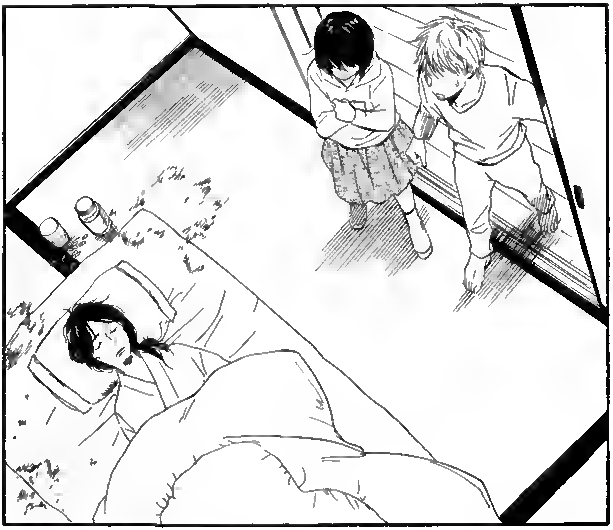
We only talked about it once, at that time.
I'M PREG-NANT.
...SIS-TER,
CAN I KEEP THE BABY?
YES, KEEP IT. I'LL BE KEEPING MY BABY TOO.
ALL RIGHT..
Only once in a phone call which lasted less than three minutes.
After hearing me say that, Yukie may have felt reassured, but in truth I had no right to give that reassurance.
...I'M SORRY...
YUKIE...


..It was raining that day
Telling so many lies, because of my willful desire.
Even now, I don't regret it.
..Not a bit.

Please don't do this I'm begging you...
...That's my child, mine
... Mama ...


Is this the extent of a mother's love?
_That child is the only possession I have left!
_What are you ?
Mama !!

kyaaaaaah
Noriko's voice!?
tap
tap
tap
tap
tap
NORIKO!
WHAT IS IT...!?



Why
Why!?
gasp
Pesticide
exhale
!!
Though it's faint, she's still breathing
NORIKO! CALL FOR AN AMBU-LANCE NOW!

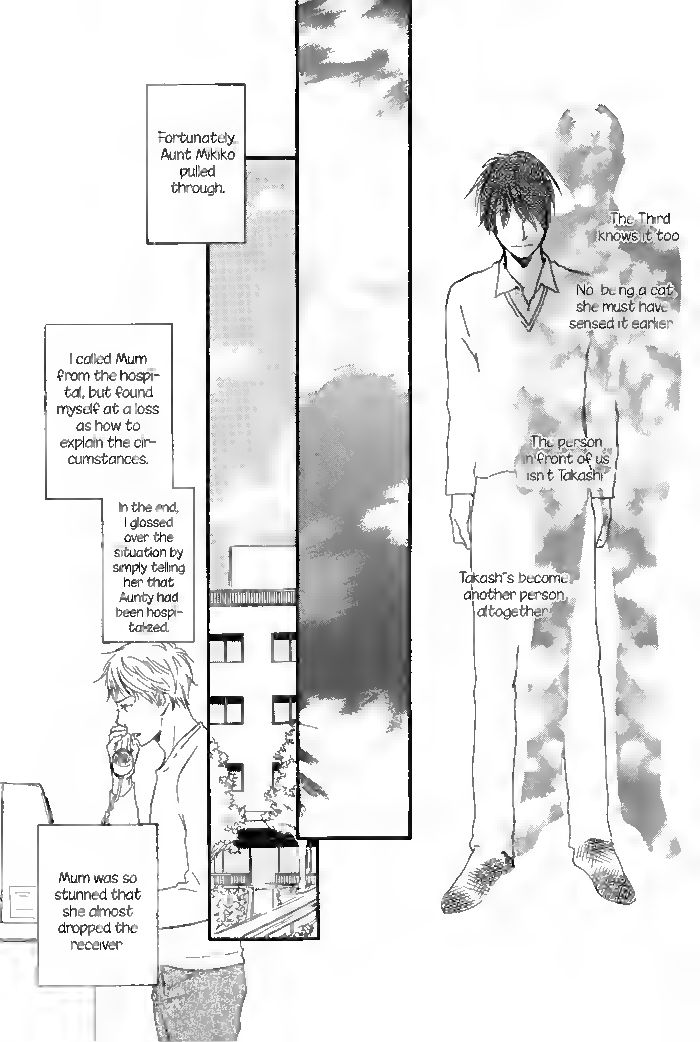
tap
tap
tap
Huh?
How can this be happening...? Aunty has no reason to do this.
Suicide
!
grab
HER PULSE

This is...
An act calculated to leave no chance of survival
WHY?
slide
!?

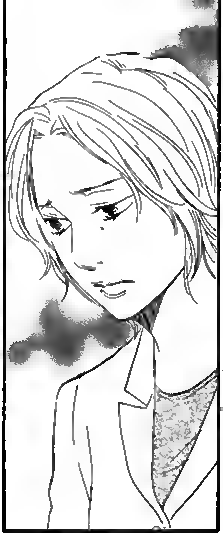
SHE'LL BE FINE WE'VE ALREADY CALLED FOR THE AMBULANCE.
DON'T SAY SUCH ILL-FATED THINGS!
IS SHE DEAD...?

THIS QUILT... CAN'T BE USED ANY MORE
TAKA-SHI...
Takashi's tone doesn't sound at all relieved...
SO SHE'S STILL ALIVE...
HONESTLY, SHE COULD HAVE PICKED SOMEWHERE ELSE TO DIE...

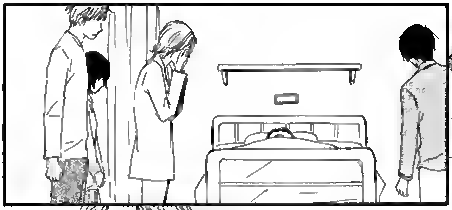
This person s NOT Takashi
PUSH
HA HA.
HEHE.
KE KE KE
This person might not even be human...
What on earth has happened to turn Takashi into this?
!?
Right even the Third is keeping away from Takashi.
She won't go near his hand! placing herself as far away as she can Just watching


Fortunately, Aunt Mikiko pulled through.
I called Mum from the hospital, but found myself at a loss as how to explain the circumstances.
In the end, I glossed over the situation by simply telling her that Aunty had been hospitalized.
Mum was so stunned that she almost dropped the receiver
The Third knows it too
No being a cat, she must have sensed it earlier
The person in front of us isn't Takashi
Takashi's become another person, altogether

What kind of question is this. ?
NO. I THINK IT WAS SUICIDE.
YOU'RE VERY SURE IT WAS SUICIDE?
Why does it sound like she's relieved?
WAS SHE HOSPITALIZED BECAUSE SHE FELL ILL?
I can't say he was smiling when he saw Aunty like that..
AND TAKASHI-CHAN?
...HE'S ALL RIGHT, JUST RATHER UPSET.
SHE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS, BUT THE DOCTOR SAYS SHE'S OUT OF DANGER.
...Finally she asks about this. Usually it's the first thing one would want to know
AND HER CONDITION NOW?
I'LL COME OVER RIGHT NOW

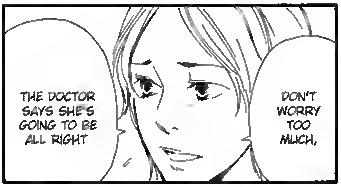


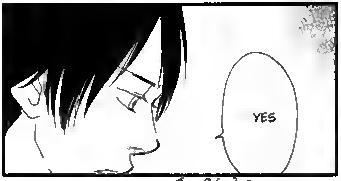
It was almost evening by the time Mum rushed over.



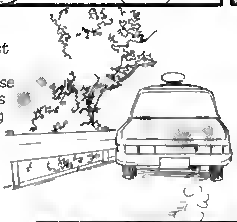
Mum pulled herself together after crying ha

After speaking with the doctor about Aunty's condition, she told us to go home with Takashi first

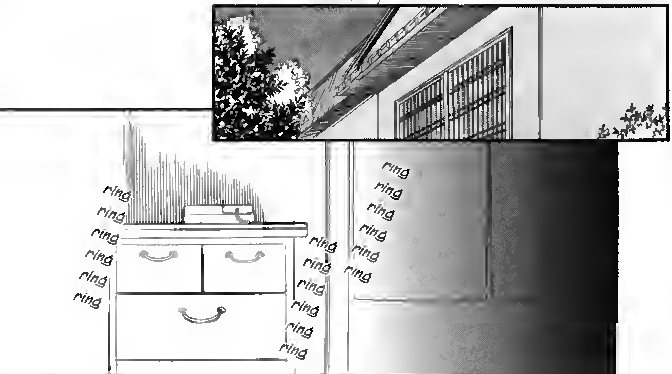




This was the first time I had seen death at such close quarters. It was truly frightening



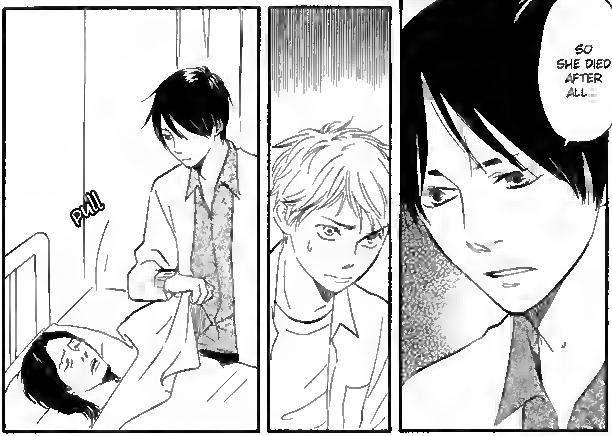
Only after Mum's arrival relieved me of the awful responsibility did I realize how frightened I had been.



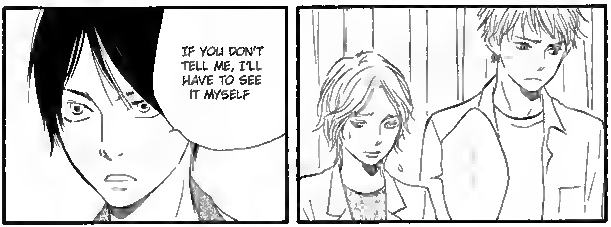
WAKE NORIKO AND TAKASHI-CHAN UP. YOU ALL HAVE TO COME OVER NOW
AUNTY'S JUST PASSED AWAY
HELLO?
NAOKI? IT'S MOM
WHAT'S THE MATTER?

DON'T LET EITHER OF THEM KNOW IT WAS SUICIDE.
I KNOW IT WAS!
NO
...WAIT A MINUTE, THAT CAN'T BE TRUE!
THE DOCTOR SAID SHE WAS GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
WHAT .. WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
NAOKI
BREAK THE NEWS AS GENTLY AS YOU CAN TO TAKASHI
I'VE ALREADY CALLED AND TOLD DAD THE NEWS

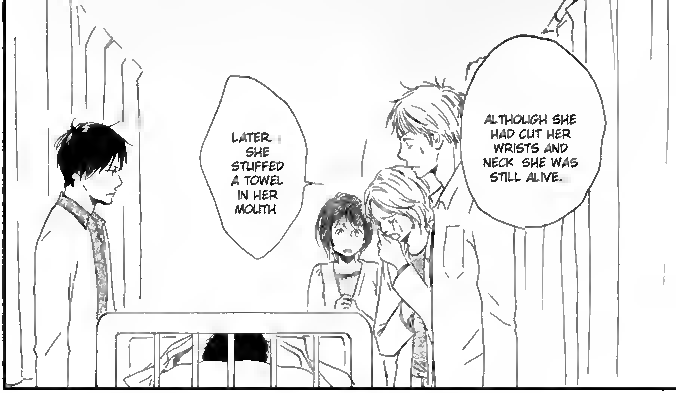
IT SEEMS SHE WOKE UP WHILE I WAS SLEEPING...
AND THEN...
SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE AGAIN

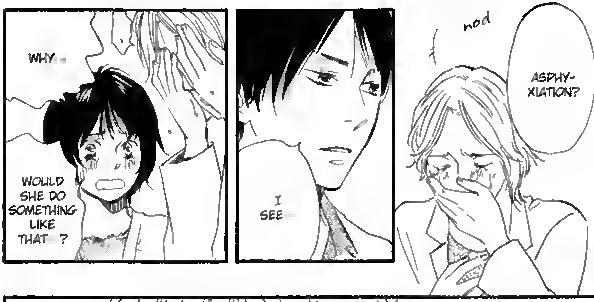

SO SHE DIED AFTER ALL...
PULL

BANDAGES...
AUNTY,
WHAT IS THIS?
THESE WEREN'T HERE YESTERDAY


IF YOU DON'T TELL ME, I'LL HAVE TO SEE IT MYSELF

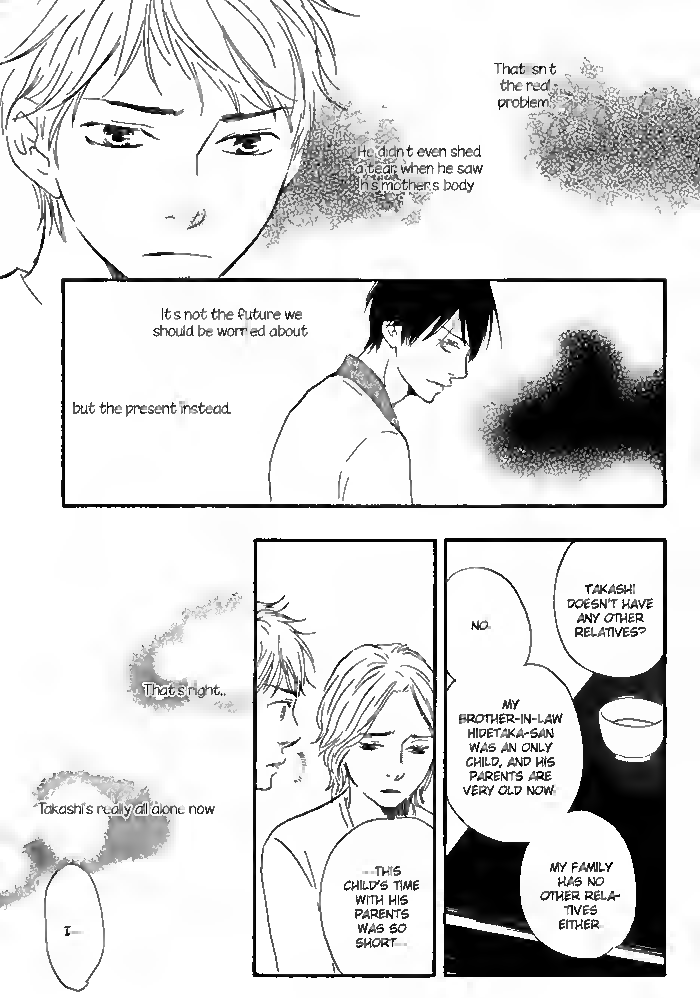
clench
WHILE I WAS SLEEPING
YOUR MOTHER WOKE UP
WHAT IS THIS?
STOP IT!
TAKASHI-CHAN!
IT SEEMS SHE SLIPPED OUT OF THE ROOM AND WENT TO THE WASHROOM
I SEE. AND THEN SHE DIED
SHE BROKE THE MIRROR ABOVE THE BASIN AND CUT HER WRISTS WITH THE GLASS SHARDS
BUT WHY?
WHY DID MY MOTHER DIE?
THOSE ARE THE WOUNDS


ALTHOUGH SHE HAD CUT HER WRISTS AND NECK SHE WAS STILL ALIVE.
LATER, SHE STUFFED A TOWEL IN HER MOUTH


WHY...
WOULD SHE DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I SEE
nod
ASPHY-XIATION?

Takashi locked himself in his room the minute we got home.
Mum and Dad thought he was distraught over losing the only family he had.
but I was relieved that Takashi had locked himself in his room.
After Dad reached the hospital we all went back to the grassy house
and hastily made arrangements for the wake and funeral.
Pour
WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW...?
IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL. IT'S NOT LIKE ANYTHING IMPORTANT IS TAUGHT IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS.
BUT THE TWO OF YOU NEED TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL.
ABOUT WHAT?
ABOUT YOU TWO.
I PLAN TO STAY UNTIL THE SEVENTH.

I SEE
IT WOULD BE BEST IF NAOKI STAYS BEHIND AFTER ALL WE CAN'T LEAVE TAKASHI ALONE AS WELL
Although Takashi will be anything but pleased if I stay on...
It's true however that we can't leave him alone in such circumstances...
CAN I STAY BEHIND TOO?
Glance
YOU'RE RIGHT
ADOPTING HIM ISN'T A PROBLEM OF COURSE, BUT THE QUESTION IS WHETHER HE'S EVEN WILLING TO LEAVE THIS HOME?
TAKASHI CAN'T FEND FOR HIMSELF, AND HE HAS NOBODY NOW
WHAT WILL WE DO ABOUT TAKASHI-KUN?
EH?


That isn't the real problem.
He didn't even shed a tear when he saw his mother's body
It's not the future we should be worried about
but the present instead.
TAKASHI DOESN'T HAVE ANY OTHER RELATIVES?
NO.
MY BROTHER-IN-LAW HIDETAKA-SAN WAS AN ONLY CHILD, AND HIS PARENTS ARE VERY OLD NOW.
MY FAMILY HAS NO OTHER RELATIVES EITHER.
---THIS CHILD'S TIME WITH HIS PARENTS WAS SO SHORT---
That's right...
Takashi's really all alone now
I—

I'LL GO SEE HOW TAKASHI IS
ME TOO
TAKA-SHI
ARE YOU OKAY...?
DON'T BE TOO UPSET

TAKASHI, AUNTY'S PASSED AWAY...
I KNOW, SO WHAT?
Chuckle
OH, YOU'RE HERE TO CONSOLE ME
I SEE YOU THOUGHT I MIGHT BE OVERLY UPSET
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU THOUGH...
Stop it
Don't say any more...
I'M NOT GOING TO WASTE ANY TEARS ON THAT KIND OF WOMAN

TAKA-SHI
Even if you had quarreled, Aunty's dead now...
And,
...Why must you say such things?
When your own mother's chosen to die so tragically, how can you still say such cruel things?
THE WAY SHE LOOKED IN DEATH WAS REALLY SCARY THOUGH
GIVEN HOW PRETTY SHE WAS WHEN ALIVE IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE IT

SHE MUST BE LYING ON THE AUTOPSY TABLE NOW
Ha ha ha
WHO ON EARTH ARE YOU?
WHO AM I?
WHAT A STRANGE THING TO ASK
YOU'RE NOT TAKASHI
LOOK, THE THIRD DOESN'T EVEN GO NEAR YOU ANYMORE!

After that the Third never came back again.

Occasionally we would glimpse her through the trees in the courtyard, but she never came near the house again...

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CHAPTER
第6話

Aunty's body was sent back in the evening.
But Takashi, who had just returned home, appeared largely indifferent to the matter
Noriko and I wishing to preserve its original aspect had an argument with the funeral company which insisted on cutting all the grass in the courtyard because of the mourners attending the wake
As simple as the ceremony was the lovely grassy house couldn't avoid the taint of reality
In fact, it went from being a charming house to being just a small run-down house in the countryside.

TAKASHI-CHAN, IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR YOU TO GET CHANGED.
DO YOU HAVE MOURNING CLOTHES? TONIGHT YOU'LL HAVE TO KEEP VIGIL AND YOU'RE THE ELDEST SON—
I GUESS YOU DON'T,
YOU'LL HAVE TO WEAR YOUR SCHOOL UNIFORM.
THE MOURNERS WILL BE ARRIVING SOON—
RATTLE
Pass

WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
YUSHI

NOTHING MUCH, REALLY
LISTEN, TAKASHI, DON'T LAUGH IN FRONT OF THE GUESTS.

FOR WHOSE SAKE ARE YOU SAYING THAT?
SO AUNT AND UNCLE WON'T WORRY? HOW CONSIDERATE OF YOU
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT
IT'S FOR YOUR SAKE AS WELL YOU DON'T WANT TO BE SENT AWAY TO A MENTAL INSTITUTION, DO YOU?
side

TAKASHI, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR HAND?
!?
YOUR LEFT HAND,
IT SEEMS TO BE BRUISED
It looks like
The finger marks left by a powerful grip...

... What kind of expression was that just now?
I'VE ALWAYS HAD THIS MARK
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? YOU NEVER HAD SUCH A BRUISE LAST YEAR!
I DID!

ISN'T IT THAT YOU JUST NEVER NOTICED IT?
I'VE HAD THIS MARK SINCE I WAS A CHILD
WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO FOOL!
EVERY-THING!
YOU CER-TAINLY LIKE TO PICK ON ME
WHAT'S REALLY THE PROBLEM?
WHAT ARE YOU PISSED OFF ABOUT?

HOW COULD I POSSIBLY GO HOME?
AUNTY'S FUNERAL ISN'T EVEN OVER YET!
WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE?
WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO GO HOME?
YOU'RE NOT WANTED HERE ANYWAY
Every-thing...
Aunty's death...
Takashi's sudden change...
Overnight, this house going from being idyllic to what it is now...
THEN...

TAKASHI!
NO MATTER HOW ELABORATE THE CEREMONY, THAT WOMAN HAS NO CHANCE OF GOING TO HEAVEN
DOESN'T WARRANT YOUR CONCERN
SUCH A THING...

GRAB
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT!
SHE'S YOUR MOTHER, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!
YOU!
MOTHER? WHOSE MOTHER?
SFX: SMACK

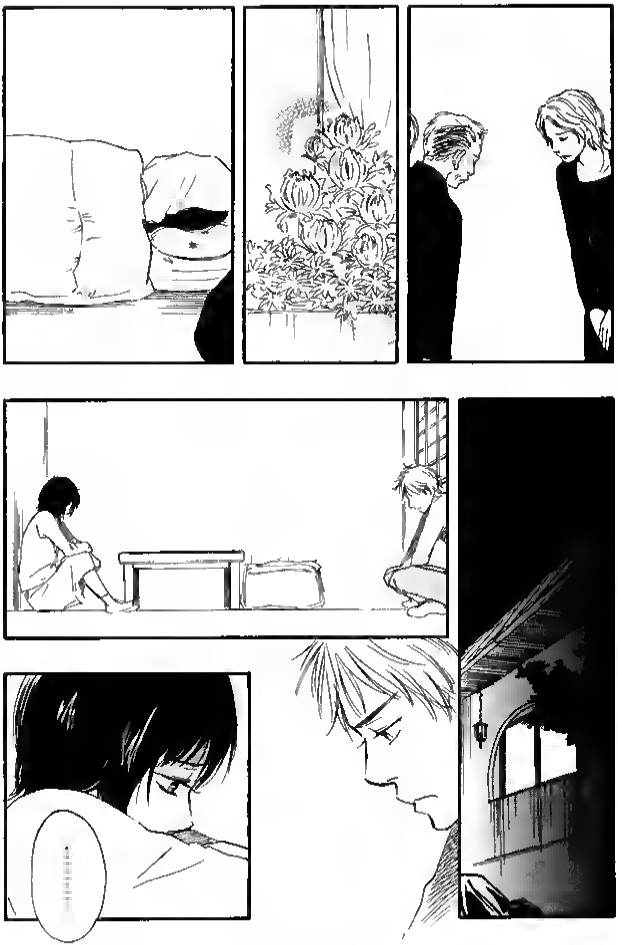
CLARE
YOU
WORRY
.....
KEEP YOUR FILTHY HANDS TO YOURSELF

YOU'RE A FILTHY LOT ALL OF YOU
FILTHY, YOU SAY?

BUT YOU PEOPLE ACT AS IF YOU OWN THIS PLACE...
THERE'S NO NEED FOR A FUNERAL
AFTER ALL, THAT WOMAN WENT STRAIGHT TO HELL THE MINUTE SHE DIED
AND SINCE THAT WOMAN'S NO LONGER HERE THIS IS MY HOUSE NOW

IT'S ANNOYING
I WISH ALL OF YOU WOULD HURRY UP AND LEAVE
„Harrowing.
The cousin whom I used to get on so well with,
Warm-hearted. refined. possessing an almost incorruptible air sometimes.
I NEED TO CHANGE COULD YOU GET OUT NOW?"

His transformation
or is me
This has gone
beyond the
borders of
abnormality



WHY DID AUNTY DIE...?
...YEAH,
WHY DID SHE DO IT?
HOW WOULD I KNOW?
I CAN'T ACCEPT IT...
WHY HAS TAKASHI-CHAN CHANGED SO MUCH?
TELL TAKASHI TO HIS FACE IF YOU WANT,
I'M BEING SERIOUS HERE
BUT YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL, THAT GUY HAS A VICIOUS TEMPER NOW
I TOLD YOU, THERE'S NO POINT TELLING ME
TAKI

THINK ABOUT IT,
WHEN WE FIRST CAME HERE. WHAT WAS TAKASHI-CHAN'S ATTITUDE?
WAS THE THIRD AVOIDING TAKASHI-CHAN THEN? THERE WAS NOTHING UNUSUAL THE NEXT DAY EITHER, WHEN WE WENT DIGGING FOR BAMBOO SHOOTS
TAKASHI-CHAN WAS STILL NORMAL THEN, WASN'T HE?
SO AM I
SO THAT MEANS SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED THAT DAY!
IT WAS ONLY THE DAY AFTER THAT HE BECAME STRANGE
THAT'S RIGHT...

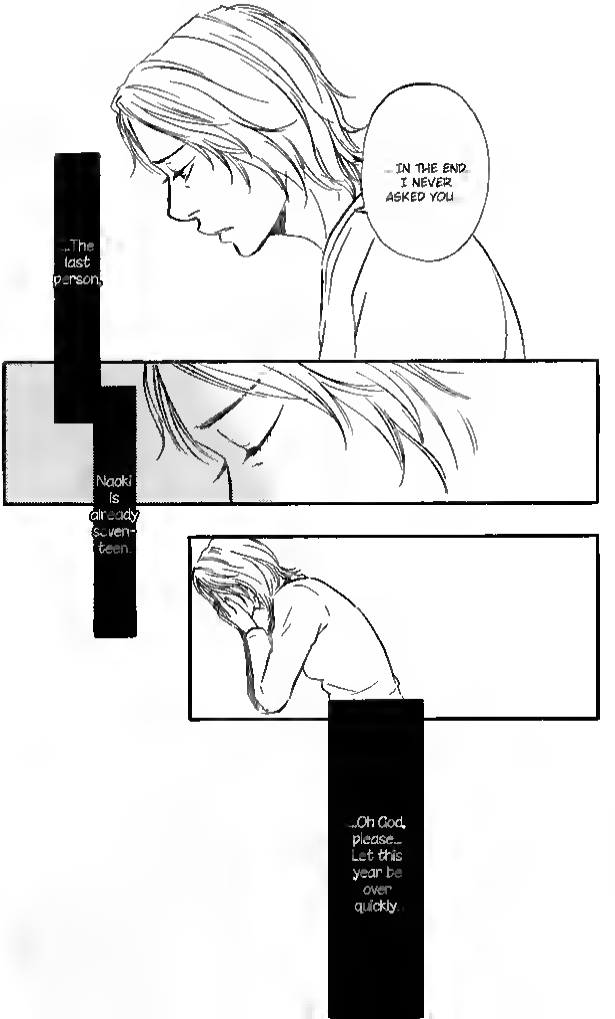
TAKASHI WASN'T AROUND AT BREAKFAST...
WHEN I WENT TO ROUSE HIM, HE LOOKED A LITTLE OUT OF SORTS AND THAT HAD EVERYONE WORRIED...
AND THEN TAKASHI GOT ANGRY
AND THE NEXT MORNING?
RIGHT? WHAT HAPPENED EXACTLY THAT DAY?
DID HE AND AUNTY QUARREL?
I DON'T KNOW... BUT TAKASHI LOOKED THE SAME BEFORE HE WENT TO BED

AND, DON'T YOU THINK AUNTY WAS ACTING STRANGELY TOO THAT DAY?
EVEN IF TAKASHI-CHAN WAS MAD AT AUNTY, WAS HER FEARFUL REACTION NORMAL?
Night time...
EVEN IF WE WERE FUSSING, THERE WAS NO REASON FOR TAKASHI-CHAN TO GET ANGRY
IF ANYTHING HAD HAPPENED, IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETIME AFTER HE WENT TO BED

AH, THAT'S RIGHT
IT'S TRUE
TAKASHI'S ATTITUDE MAY HAVE BEEN SHOCKING, BUT TO BE THAT UNNERVED BY IT ISN'T NORMAL
I THINK IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH AUNTY'S DEATH
IT'S TOO STRANGE
WHY DID AUNTY CHOOSE TO DIE IN SUCH A WAY?
NO MATTER WHAT... IT WAS JUST TOO...
he
he
he
Besides...
Aunty's depression was so obvious even outsiders had noticed it
She looks rather unhappy recently

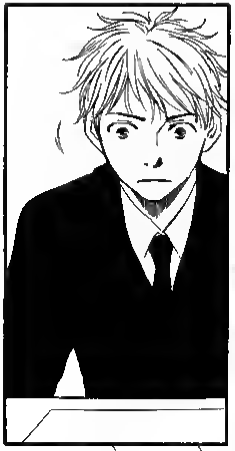
Whenever my birthday was mentioned, she looked really uneasy...
"She seems worried about my age!"
So is Mum...
And when I called to tell her Aunty had been hospitalized, why did she ask such a strange question first?
"YOU'RE VERY SURE IT WAS SUICIDE?"
It's all too strange, something amiss

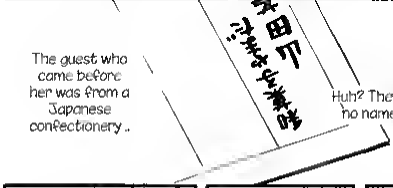
NOW I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT—
BACK THEN IT FELT LIKE WE HAD BEEN ABANDONED—
WHY—?
Brother didn't come out
Papa and Mama didn't come out either...!
Sister!

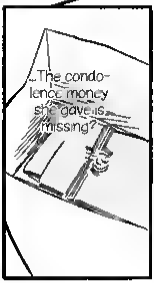

...IN THE END, I NEVER ASKED YOU
...The last person.
Naoki is already seventeen.
...Oh God, please... Let this year be over quickly...

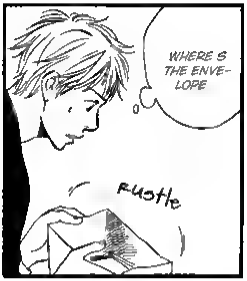
The day of Aunty's funeral was a beautiful, sunny day

I was really afraid of seeing that expressionless face suddenly burst out laughing.
I didn't want to see Takashi.
As one of the main mourners, I didn't have to receive guests but I didn't want to remain in the prayer hall.
受付
exhale
Huh?
Where have I seen this person before?









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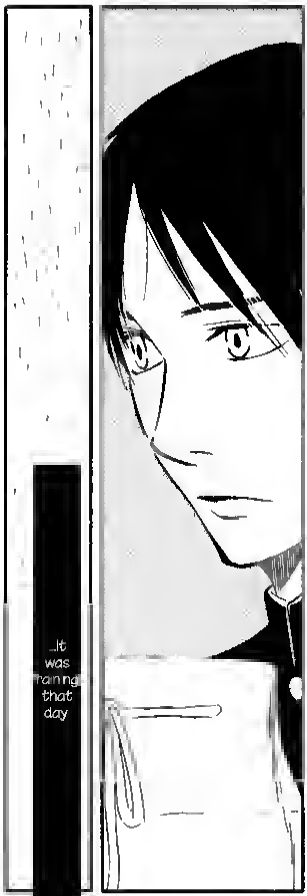
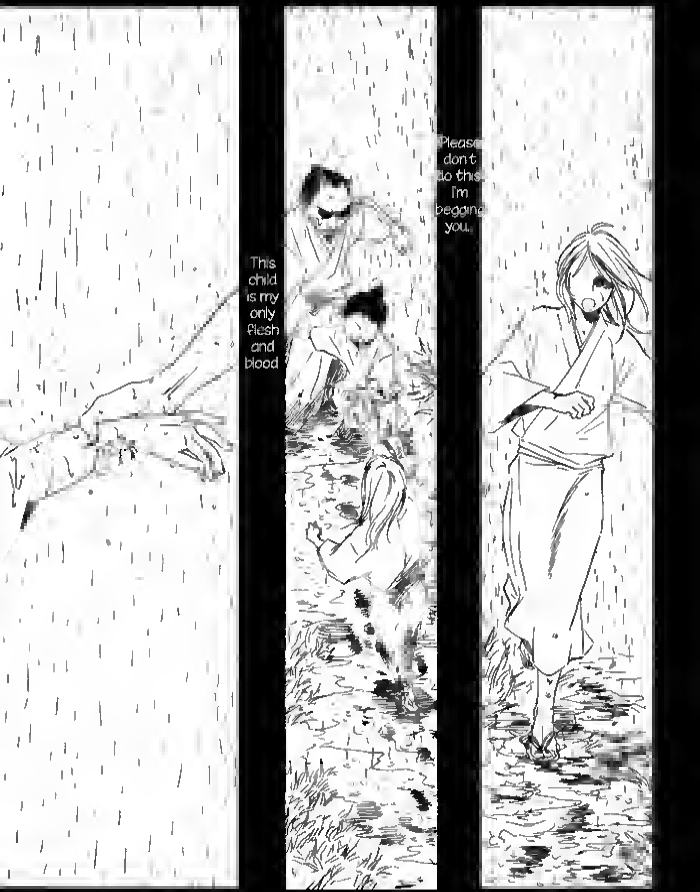
NAOKI THE CEREMONY'S ABOUT TO START
I definitely saw her face...
Strange? Why can't I remember her face now...
During the chanting I glanced round surreptitiously,
but I didn't see that woman among the guests who had come to pay their respects.



And Takashi...

Remained impassive from the time the ceremony ended to the time he arrived home, carrying the white urn containing Aunty's ashes


This child is my only flesh and blood
Please don't do this. I'm begging you.

Mama
You're more concerned about your loss than about your child's life!
What?
...Is this the extent of a mother's love?

第7話

I'LL BE BACK ON THE SEVENTH
AND NORIKO TOO... SHE SEEMS VERY DOWN. SO YOU HAVE TO KEEP HER COMPANY
...LOOK AFTER TAKASHI-KUN
nod
I'M SORRY YOU HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT SO MANY THINGS
IT'S OKAY

VROOOMM
個人
Creak
step
step

Bliss
http://bliss.diamond-fansub.net

NO ONE
DON'T LIE TO ME I HEARD A VOICE
TAKASHI WHO'S IN THERE?
NO, YOU CAN'T
IS SOMEBODY IN THERE WITH YOU? CAN I ENTER?
NAOKI?
COME IN AND SEE FOR YOURSELF THEN
he he
he he
DAMN IT!
!?
Pull

Sly
There's no handle.
Shake
Scrabble
It's only a painting of a door on the wall.
As is.
TAKASHI, OPEN THE DOOR!

TAKASHI!
YOU CAN DO THAT MUCH BY YOURSELF RIGHT?
He he he...
Giggle
What's going on..
What the hell is happening!
He he he...
CUT OFF THE CAT'S CLAWS, AND THE CAT CAN'T OPEN THE DOOR.
— OH YES,
WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT THE ASHES, WEREN'T WE? WHEN PICKING THE BONES, THEY SHOULD ACTUALLY BE CRUSHED INTO SMALLER PIECES
OTHERWISE THEY WON'T FIT INTO THE URN
It's not my imagination there's really someone else in there
WITHOUT CLAWS TO GRIP WITH THE CAT CAN'T OPEN THE DOOR, BUT IT CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY, SO IT'LL KEEP SCRATCHING AT THE DOOR
HEHE
HEHEHE

WELL I CRUSHED HER HYOID BONE ANYWAY.
THE BONES WERE SURPRISINGLY BRITTLE.
AFTER THE BONES ARE CRUSHED THEY LOOK JUST LIKE ASH.
THOROUGHLY SCATTERED.
THAT KIND OF WOMAN.
HER BONES WERE ACTUALLY WHITE.
That kind of woman.
To say that about his mother!?

BANG
TAKASHI!
TAKASHI!
OPEN THE DOOR NOW!
BANG

silence

Exhale...
..How can this be happening?
This painful sensation, it's like hitting a wall

This is the door
slide
but there's no way to open it...
.....

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
!
I'M LOOKING AT THE SEA

...YOU QUARRELED WITH TAKASHI-CHAN AGAIN?

IT'S NOT LIKE...
THAT

BROTHER, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES
Ware ware

slide
!!

TAKASHI-CHAN I'M COMING IN
It won't open that door is...

WHERE'S TAKASHI-CHAN? IN HIS ROOM?
nod

Even the windows are locked
There's nobody in the room
Shock
HE'S NOT IN
...I see
There was nobody in here.
HAHA—
BROTHER, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE
stand

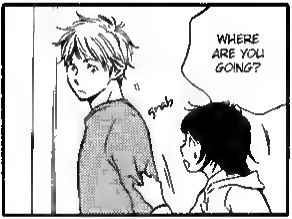
I'm all right, because I get it now.
shift
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW
The cause of Takashi's transformation, Aunty's death, the changes wrought in this grassy house...

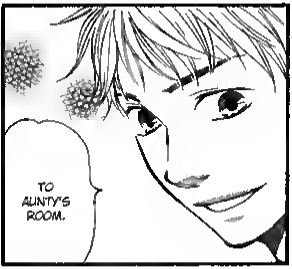
Something transgressing the edge of common sense...
It caused this household to be torn asunder, and Takashi to change...
Something alien invaded this house, and seized Takashi's soul.
...It's behind everything that's happened in this household.
By the next day, he had changed entirely.
Something happened to him the night before.
DURING THE NIGHT.
THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING STRANGE I FEEL THERE'S SOMEONE THERE
That day when we went to pick lotus roots, that expression Takashi wore as he struggled to put it into words.

Step
Step
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, BROTHER!
There's a reason behind Aunty's death and the change in Takashi, an undeniable reason.
There's no way that underlying reason can be perceived with common sense alone or preconceived notions.

I'M GOING TO FIND OUT THE REASON
I WANT TO KNOW WHY AUNTY KILLED HERSELF

AUNTY'S ROOM?


WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
Grab


TO AUNTY'S ROOM.

There must have been a reason for Aunty's sudden suicide
And the change in Takashi was part of the reason.
"If I had taken Takashi more seriously then, perhaps things wouldn't have turned out as they did
— NO LUCK
THERE AREN'T ANY LETTERS OR DIARIES IN HERE
Aunty had packed her things so meticulously that there was nothing remotely irregular
BROTHER, WHAT ARE THESE?
THREE BOXES

Crests bearing the famous "gozan no kiri" design are very popular
Such crests are usually featured on ceremonial robes.
NO, IT ISN'T THE LEAVES OF THIS CREST ARE POINTED, YET THE FLOWERS ARE ROUND? THIS ISN'T THE "KIRI", IT'S THE "NASU"*
IT'S "NASU-GIRI"

*The Aubergine

*The Paulownia Crest

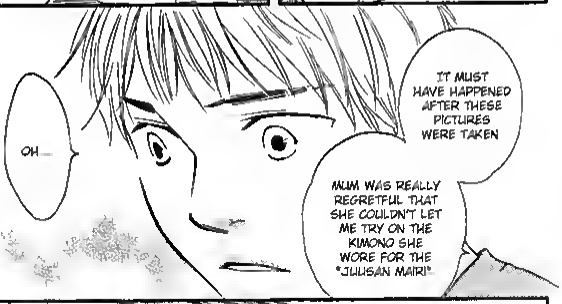
AND TAKASHI'S FAMILY'S CREST IS THE IMAGE OF TWO ENCIRCLED ARROWHEADS
YOU EVEN KNOW ABOUT SUCH THINGS?
I REMEMBER IT BECAUSE UNTIL AUNTY SHOWED ME HER KIMONO, I HAD NEVER SEEN SUCH A CREST BEFORE.

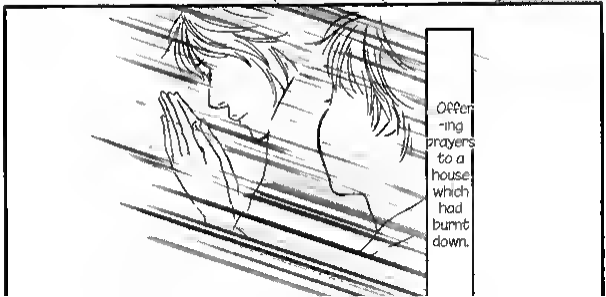
THERE ARE PHOTOS IN THIS BOX
EVEN TAKASHI'S BELT HAS BEEN CAREFULLY KEPT
Click
SAVED PLEATS AND A FAMILY REGISTRY
SO AUNTY HAD KEPT ALL THIS
So alike...
THIS ONE... WHO DO YOU THINK THIS IS?
THIS MUST HAVE BEEN TAKEN WHEN MUM WENT ON THE "JUUSAN MAIRI"* AND TOOK PART IN THE "PRAYING FOR WISDOM ASSEMBLY"
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN THIS MUST BE AUNT MIKIKO HERE
THIS IS MUM, ISN'T IT?
LOOKS LIKE IT

*The last in the annual temple visits for children made when they turn thirteen.

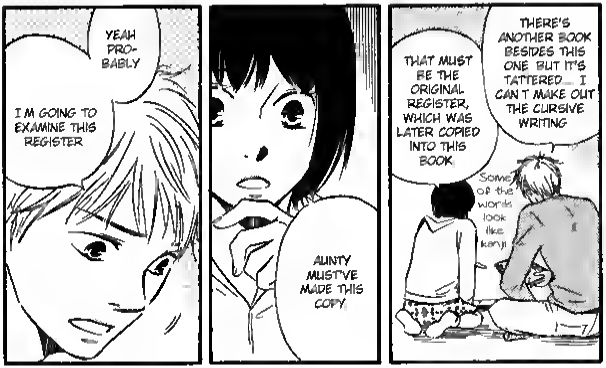
THEN
THIS MUST BE UNCLE MUNEKAZU
WOW. YOU LOOK JUST LIKE HIM
AH!
YEAH
LOOK
IT IS THE SUGATA FAMILY CREST AFTER ALL
*The 7 5 3 Festival for children
THIS IS UNCLE, ISN'T IT? THIS WAS TAKEN DURING THE SHICHI-GO-SAN.*
LOOK AT ALL THOSE CRESTS. HE MUST'VE BEEN FIVE THEN
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
BECAUSE MOST FIVE-YEAR-OLDS AREN'T NORMALLY DRESSED SO ELABORATELY, AND THE KIMONO'S COVERED WITH SO MANY STAMPS OF THE FAMILY CREST.
SO THE SUGATA FAMILY WAS A WEALTHY ONE

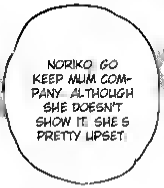
*Girl's Festival


IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED AFTER THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN
OH
MUM WAS REALLY REGRETFUL THAT SHE COULDN'T LET ME TRY ON THE KIMONO SHE WORE FOR THE "JUUSAN MAIRI"



Flip
THIS WAS ALSO PLACED IN THE THIRD BOX... WHAT'S THIS?
What am I thinking?
NAMES, BIRTH AND DEATH DATES THIS MUST BE SOMETHING LIKE A FAMILY REGISTER OF THE SUGATA FAMILY
WHAT'S THAT?
A RECORD OF FAMILY ANCESTORS
初
菅田 豊仲
長男 辰衛
WHY IS THAT?
BEATS ME...
IT'S ALL BLANK AFTER THIS PAGE
YOUR NAME'S WRITTEN ON THE LAST PAGE...


YEAH PROBABLY
I'M GOING TO EXAMINE THIS REGISTER
AUNTY MUST'VE MADE THIS COPY.
THERE'S ANOTHER BOOK BESIDES THIS ONE. BUT IT'S TATTERED... I CAN'T MAKE OUT THE CURSIVE WRITING
THAT MUST BE THE ORIGINAL REGISTER, WHICH WAS LATER COPIED INTO THIS BOOK.
Some of the words look like kanji.


NORIKO, GO KEEP MUM COMPANY. ALTHOUGH SHE DOESN'T SHOW IT, SHE'S PRETTY UPSET.

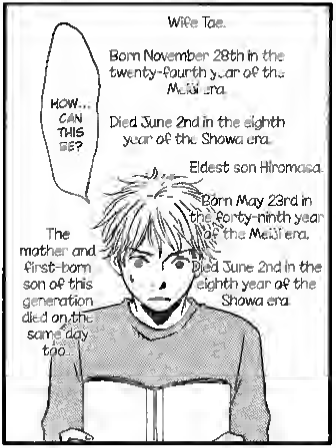
What can this mean?
There're only four names written here
The previous page...
FLIP
sigh
Aunty and Mum aren't carrying on the Sugata line, so why write our names?
And only the children's names are written. Why haven't the husband's names been included?
長男 宗和
昭和三十
昭和四
It's Uncle Munekazu, the one I take after...
!?

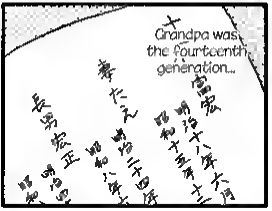
I heard he died young... No wonder the few photos left are all of him in his teens.
And it was just three days after his birthday. How did he die...?
BORN ON JULY 28TH IN THE THIRTIETH YEAR OF THE SHOWA ERA DIED AUGUST 1ST IN THE FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR.
HE WAS ONLY SEVENTEEN...
They never talked about what he was like or their childhood memories of their brother...
I never asked how Uncle Munekazu died. Mum and Aunty never talked about him either.
It wasn't just Uncle...
They never once talked about anything related to the Suzata family...
NO IT'S NOT THAT...

The family home was in a bowl-shaped valley
I've never been there, so I don't know what it's like.
I've never been there?
I must've been there once?
...A parasol...
Right. Mum was holding a parasol then.
I dimly recall her clasped hands as she prayed in front of someone's tombstone

COULD THAT HAVE BEEN UNCLE'S TOMBSTONE...
I hadn't even started attending primary school...
So it must've been around the fifty-ninth year of the Showa era Uncle passed away in the forty-seventh year
Counting backwards, that would've been the thirteenth anniversary of Uncle's death
Huh?
Slam
WHAT ON EARTH?
They died on the same day as Uncle...
Grandpa and Grandma also died on 1 August in the forty-seventh year of the Showa era!?

WAIT...
Mum's "Juusan Mairi" photo. She turned thirteen in the forty-seventh year of the Showa era.
SHE WAS THIRTEEN WHEN THE HOUSE WAS BURNT TO THE GROUND
THAT FIRE?
Grandpa, Grandma and Uncle all died in that fire...


Wife Tae.
Born November 28th in the twenty-fourth year of the Meiji era.
Died June 2nd in the eighth year of the Showa era.
HOW... CAN THIS BE?
Eldest son Hiromasa.
Born May 23rd in the forty-ninth year of the Meiji era.
Died June 2nd in the eighth year of the Showa era.
The mother and first-born son of this generation died on the same day too.


Grandpa was the fourteenth generation...

...Huh?

The ninth generation... The second son and his parents died on the same day

The first-born son seems to have died before or after that...

And earlier... The mother first-born son, his wife and second son of the tenth generation... All five died on the same day

The twelfth generation too the mother and first-born son died on the same day...

ELEVENTH GENERATION THE MOTHER DIED A YEAR BEFORE HER FIRST-BORN SON DID

FLIP

Before the ninth generation, nothing similar seems to have happened... Strictly speaking it started from the tenth generation

Let's see... in terms of the Gregorian calender

The five generations from the tenth to the fourteenth. No six generations including Aunty and Takashi...

For six generations, the mothers of the Sugata family have never outlived their first-born sons...

FOR THIS GENERATION, WHY DIDN'T THE MOTHER PASS AWAY ON THE SAME DAY AS THE FIRST-BORN SON?

10th generation
First-born son Kichi
Born April 1801
Died 8 May 1816
Second son Ichisaku
Born December 1814
Died 16 January 1832
Mother Die... 16 January 1832

STRANGE... KICHI DIED BEFORE NAGACHIKA

BASED ON THIS CALCULATION, KICHI WAS SEVENTEEN WHEN HE DIED
NAGACHIKA WAS FOUR THEN. AND DIED WHEN HE WAS
SEVEN-TEEN
SEVENTEEN?

When Uncle Munekazu died, he was...?
Kichi was? Nagachika was?
Seventeen...
And the day after tomorrow, Takashi will turn seven-teen...

「過ぎる十七の春」
第①巻
終

過ぎる十七の春

「過ぎる十七の春」第2巻完結編、
2008年夏発売!!
隆が豹変したのも、伯母が自殺したのも、
穏やかだったこの家を変えてしまったのも、すべてあの夜だ。
なにかがこの家を覆い、隆の魂を絡め取ったのだ。
そして隆も十七歳を迎える――。

バーズコミックススペシャル

黒祠の島

全3巻

友人・菊木の行方を捜し、
式部が訪れたのは因習に囚われた島だった。
閉ざされた島での捜索は難航するが
やがて式部は隠蔽されたある事件を知る。

ある嵐の夜、神社の木に逆さに釘で
磔にされた惨殺死体が発見され隠蔽された――
それは、菊木の変わり果てた姿なのか!?

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